

MY BOOK HOUSE

5-



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



Rena V. Doroff

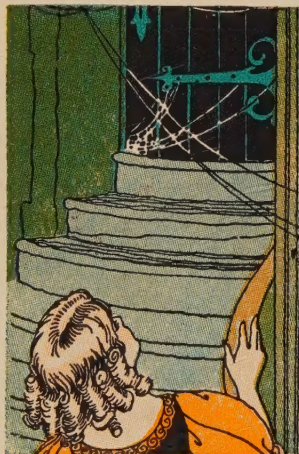








UP ONE
PAIR OF STAIRS
OF
MY BOOK HOUSE



EDITED BY
OLIVE BEAUPRÉ MILLER

PUBLISHERS
THE BOOK HOUSE for CHILDREN
CHICAGO

COPYRIGHT 1920, 1925, 1928, 1937, BY

OLIVE BEAUPRÉ MILLER

COPYRIGHT IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND AND IN ALL
COUNTRIES SUBSCRIBING TO THE BERN CONVENTION.
REGISTERED AT STATIONERS' HALL. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

PRINTED IN U.S.A.





CONTENTS

	PAGE
BABE MOSES, THE	Retold from The Bible 156
BATTLE OF THE FIREFLY AND THE APES, THE	A Filipino Tale 59
BOASTER, THE	Adapted from Aesop 175
BROOK, THE	James Whitcomb Riley 161
BIRDS' ST. VALENTINE'S DAY, THE	Geoffrey Chaucer 198
BROWNIES IN THE TOY SHOP, THE	Palmer Cox 40
CAP THAT MOTHER MADE, THE	A Swedish Tale 12
CHANTICLEER AND PARTLET	Retold from the Nun's Priest's Tale by Chaucer 176
CIRCUS PARADE, THE	Olive Beaupr� Miller 46
CITY SMOKE	Olive Beaupr� Miller 195
CLOUDS.	48
CLYTIE	Flora J. Cooke 151
DARING PRINCE, THE	James Whitcomb Riley 127
DOG IN THE MANGER, THE	Adapted from Aesop 163
DOLL UNDER THE BRIAR ROSEBUSH, THE	Jorgen Moe 204
ECCHOING GREEN, THE	William Blake 197
ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG, AN	Oliver Goldsmith 62
ELF AND THE DORMOUSE, THE	Oliver Herford 39
FOOLISH, TIMID, LITTLE HARE, THE	An East Indian Fable 76
FUNERAL MARCH OF A MARIONETTE	The Story of the Music by Charles Fran�ois Gounod 148
GIRL THAT STRUTS ABOUT, THE	Kate Greenaway 26
GOLDILOCKS AND THE THREE BEARS	An English Folk Tale 20
HAPPY DAY IN THE CITY, A	Olive Beaupr� Miller 181
HOW BEAUTIFUL IS THE RAIN	Henry Wadsworth Longfellow 25
HONEST WOODMAN, THE	Adapted from La Fontaine 114
HOW THE BRAZILIAN BEETLES GOT THEIR GORGEOUS COATS	Elsie Spicer Eells 172
INDIAN CHILDREN	Annette Wynne 93

	PAGE
KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES, THE William Wordsworth	133
LITTLE BLUE APRON	210
LITTLE GIRL AND THE HARE, THE Adapted from Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm	111
LITTLE HALF-CHICK A Spanish Folk Tale	85
LITTLE MAID OF FAR JAPAN Annette Wynne	164
MOCK TURTLE'S SONG, THE Lewis Carroll	170
MRS. TABBY GRAY Maud Lindsay	129
NEW YEAR'S DAY Olive Beaupré Miller	45
OEYVIND AND MARIT Björnstjerne Björnson	137
OF A TAILOR AND A BEAR From the Music by Edward MacDowell	134
O MARY, GO AND CALL THE CATTLE HOME Charles Kingsley	25
OWL'S ANSWER TO TOMMY, THE Juliana Horatia Ewing	29
OWL, THE Alfred Tennyson	28
PETER RABBIT DECIDES TO CHANGE HIS NAME Thornton W. Burgess	49
PICTURE BY A LITTLE GIRL AND A POEM BY A LITTLE GIRL	91
QUICK-RUNNING SQUASH, A Alicia Aspinwall	104
RIGHT TIME TO LAUGH, THE An Australian Tale	81
ROAD TO CHINA, THE Olive Beaupré Miller	19
ROSY POSY Laura E. Richards	128
SCHOOL IS OVER Kate Greenaway	27
SEA SHELL, THE Amy Lowell	150
SEA, THE Emily Dickinson	155
SHAKING OF THE PEAR-TREE, THE Dinah M. Muloch Craik	146
SHEPHERD, THE William Blake	196
SHOEMAKER AND THE ELVES, THE A German Folk Tale	95
SONG OF SOLOMON The Bible	136
SONG OF THE LEPRECHAUN OR FAIRY SHOEMAKER William Allingham	94
STORY ABOUT THE LITTLE RABBITS, A Joel Chandler Harris	123
STORY OF LI'L HANNIBAL, THE Carolyn Sherwin Bailey	116
SWING, THE Robert Louis Stevenson	92
THREE JOVIAL HUNSMEN	110
TONGUE-CUT SPARROW, THE Teresa Peirce Williston	165
TWINKLING BUGS	61
VERSES ON KINGSLEY'S WATER BABIES	211
WEE, WEE MANNIE AND THE BIG, BIG COO, THE A Scotch Folk Tale	99
WIND AND THE SUN, THE Adapted from Aesop	162
WONDERFUL WORLD, THE William Brighty Rands	11

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



THE WONDERFUL WORLD*

WILLIAM BRIGHTY RANDS

Great, wide, beautiful, wonderful World,
With the wonderful water round you curled,
And the wonderful grass upon your breast—
World, you are beautifully dressed.

*Reprinted by the courteous permission of John Lane Company.



The Cap That Mother Made

A SWEDISH TALE

Once upon a time there was a little boy, named Anders, and he had a new cap. A prettier cap was never seen, for his mother herself had knit it; and who could ever make anything half so nice as Mother! The cap was yellow, except a small part in the middle. That was blue, for there had not been enough yellow yarn to make it all; and the tassel was blue.

Anders' brothers and sisters walked about admiring him; then he put his hands in his pockets and went out for a walk, for he was altogether willing that everyone should see how fine his mother had made him.

The first person he met was a farmhand walking beside a cart loaded with peat, and bidding his horse gee-up. When he saw Anders' new cap, the farmhand made a bow so deep that he bent nearly double, but

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

Anders trotted proudly past him, holding his head very high.

At the turn of the road he came upon Lars, the tanner's boy. Lars was such a big boy that he wore high boots and carried a jack-knife. But oh, when he saw that cap, he stood quite still to gaze at it, and he could not help going up close to Anders and fingering the splendid blue tassel.

"I'll give you my cap for yours," he cried, "and my jack-knife besides!"

Now this knife was a splendid one, and Anders knew that as soon as one has a jack-knife, one is almost a man. But still he would not for all the world give up, for the knife, the cap which Mother had made.

"Oh, no, I could not do that," he said. And then he nodded good-bye to Lars, and went on his own way.

Soon after this Anders met a queer little lady. She curtsied to him until her skirts spread out about her like a balloon and she said: "Lad, you are so fine, why do you not go to the king's ball?"

"Yes, why do I not?" thought Anders. "With this cap, I am altogether fit to go and visit the king."

And off he went.

In the palace yard stood two soldiers with guns over their shoulders and shining helmets on their heads. When Anders went to pass them, they both leveled their guns at him.

"Where are you going?" asked one of the soldiers.

M Y B O O K H O U S E

"I am going to the king's ball," answered Anders.

"No, you are not," said the other soldier, trying to push him back. "Nobody can go to the king's ball without a uniform."

But just at this moment the princess came tripping across the yard, dressed in a white satin gown, with ribbons of gold.

"This lad has no uniform, it's true," she said, "but he has a very fine cap and that will do just as well. He shall come to the ball."

So she took Anders by the hand and walked with him up the broad marble stairs, past the soldiers who



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



stood on every third step, through magnificent halls where gentlemen and ladies in silk and velvet were waiting about. And wherever Anders went, all the people bowed to him, for, as like as not, they thought him a prince when they saw what it was that he wore on his head.

At the farther end of the largest hall a table was set with long rows of golden plates and goblets. On huge silver platters were piles of tarts and cakes. The princess sat down under a blue canopy with bouquets

M Y B O O K H O U S E

of roses on it; and she bade Anders to sit in a golden chair by her side.

"But you must not eat with your cap on your head," she said, and she started to take it off.

"Oh, yes, I can eat just as well with it on," said Anders, and he held on to it with both his hands, for if it were taken away from him, he did not feel sure he would ever get it again.

"Well, well, give it to me," begged the princess, "and I will give you a kiss."

The princess was beautiful, and Anders would surely have liked to be kissed by her, but not for anything in this world would he give up the cap that Mother had made. He only shook his head.

Then the princess filled his pockets full of cakes; she put her own heavy gold chain around his neck, and bent down and kissed him.

"Now will you give me the cap?" she said.

Anders moved farther back in his chair, but he never once took his hands from his head.

Then the doors were thrown open and the king himself entered, accompanied by gentlemen in glittering uniforms and plumed hats. The king wore a mantle of blue velvet, bordered with ermine, and he had a large gold crown on his head.

When he saw Anders in the golden chair, he smiled.

"That is a very fine cap you have," he said.

"So it is," said Anders, "it is made of Mother's

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

best yarn, and she has knit it herself, and every one wants to get it away from me.”

“But surely you would like to change caps with me,” said the king, and he lifted his shining gold crown from his head.

Anders said never a word but when the king came nearer to him with his gold crown in one hand, and the other hand outstretched toward that beautiful cap, then, with one jump, Anders was out of his chair. Like an arrow he darted out of the hall, through the palace, down the stairs, and across the yard. He ran so fast that the necklace the princess had given him fell from his neck, and all the cakes rolled out of his pockets.

But he had his cap! He had his cap! He had his cap! With both hands he clutched it tight as he ran back home to his mother's cottage. “Well, Anders, where have you been?” cried his mother. So he told her all about what had happened.

All his brothers and sisters stood and listened with mouths wide open.

But when his big brother heard how he had



M Y B O O K H O U S E

refused to give his cap in exchange for the king's golden crown, he cried out:

"Anders, you were foolish! Just think of all the things you might have bought with the king's gold crown! Velvet jackets and long leather boots and silken hose, and a sword. Besides, you could have bought yourself a much finer cap with a feather in it."

Anders' face grew red, very red. "I was not foolish," he answered. "I could never have bought a finer cap, not for all the king's crown. I could never have bought anything in all this world one half so fine as the cap my mother made me!"

Then his mother took him up on her lap, and kissed him.



THE ROAD TO CHINA

OLIVE BEAUPRÉ MILLER

I LEARNED today the world is round
Like my big rubber ball,
With China on the other side,
Down there below us all.

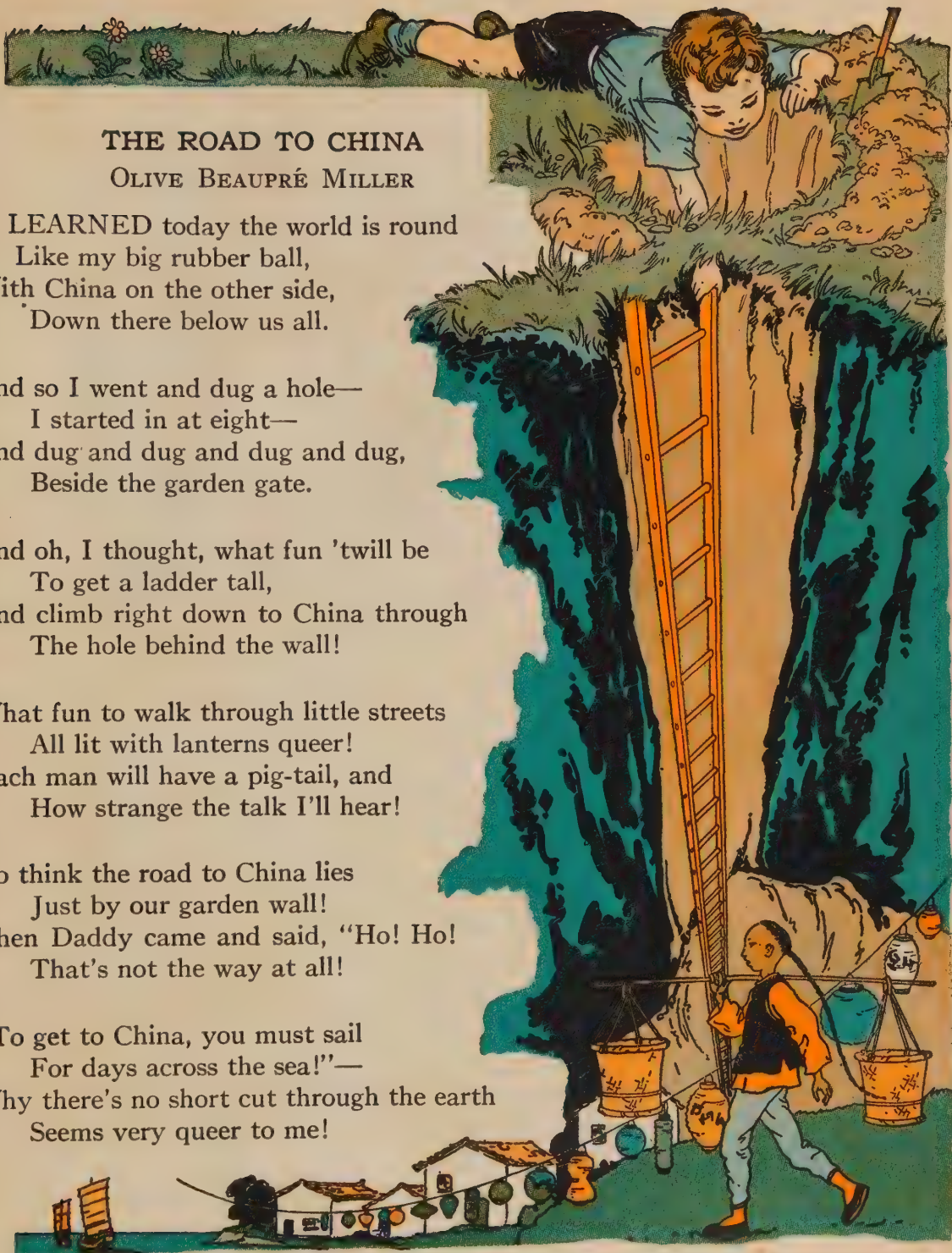
And so I went and dug a hole—
I started in at eight—
And dug and dug and dug and dug,
Beside the garden gate.

And oh, I thought, what fun 'twill be
To get a ladder tall,
And climb right down to China through
The hole behind the wall!

What fun to walk through little streets
All lit with lanterns queer!
Each man will have a pig-tail, and
How strange the talk I'll hear!

To think the road to China lies
Just by our garden wall!
Then Daddy came and said, "Ho! Ho!
That's not the way at all!

"To get to China, you must sail
For days across the sea!"—
Why there's no short cut through the earth
Seems very queer to me!





Goldilocks and the Three Bears*

AN ENGLISH FOLK TALE

ONCE upon a time there were three bears who lived in a little house of their own, in a wood. There was a great, huge bear who was the Father Bear; a middle-sized bear who was the Mother Bear; and a tiny, wee bear who was the Baby Bear. They had each a pot for their porridge—a little pot for the tiny, wee bear; a middle-sized pot for the middle-sized bear; and a great, huge pot for the great, huge bear. One morning the three bears found their porridge was too hot, so they left it to cool in their porridge pots and went out for a walk in the woods. While they were gone, a little girl came

*Long ago in "Scrapefoot," a tale from *Reynard the Fox*, the visitor to the Bears was a Fox. Robert Southey, the poet and friend of Coleridge, made an old woman the visitor, but the English people took the story over and substituted a pretty little girl.

U P O N E P A I R O F S T A I R S

along. She was called Goldilocks, because her hair shone like gold, and she, too, was out for a walk in the woods.

"I wonder who lives here," she said to herself, as she saw the funny little house. She knocked and she knocked and she knocked, but nobody came. Then, without ever stopping to think that she had no business to enter where she was not invited, she opened the door and peeped in. There on the table were the three pots of porridge—the great, huge pot; the middle-sized pot; and the tiny, wee pot. Goldilocks tasted the porridge in the great huge pot, but it was too hot. So she tasted the porridge in the middle-sized pot, but that was too cold. Then she tasted the porridge in the tiny, wee pot, and that was just right. So she ate it all up!

Now in the room she saw three chairs—a great, huge chair; a middle-sized chair; and a tiny, wee chair. So Goldilocks sat down in the great, huge chair, but that was too hard. Then she sat down in the middle-sized chair, but that was too soft. So she tried the tiny, wee chair, and that was just right! But, no sooner had she got quite comfortable than there was a crash and a bang! The tiny, wee chair broke into tiny, wee pieces and spilled Goldilocks on the floor.

So Goldilocks went into the bedroom. There she saw a great, huge bed; a middle-sized bed; and a tiny, wee bed. First, she lay down on the great, huge bed, but that was too hard. Then she lay down on the middle-sized bed, but that was too soft. At last she lay down on the tiny,

M Y B O O K H O U S E



wee bed, and that was just right! So Goldilocks curled up under the covers and fell fast asleep.

After a while, along came the three bears who lived in the house—the great, huge bear who was the Father Bear; the middle-sized bear who was the Mother Bear; and the tiny, wee bear who was the Baby Bear.

When the great, huge bear saw his pot, he roared in his rough, gruff voice,

“WHO HAS BEEN TASTING MY PORRIDGE?”

When the middle-sized bear saw her pot, she cried out in her middle-sized voice,

“Who has been tasting my porridge?”

And when the tiny, wee bear saw his pot, he squealed in his tiny, wee voice,

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

"Who has been tasting my porridge and eaten it all up?"

When the great, huge bear saw his chair with the cushion all flattened down, he roared in his rough, gruff voice,

"WHO HAS BEEN SITTING IN MY CHAIR?"

And the middle-sized bear, when she saw the cushion all flattened down on her chair, cried in her middle-sized voice,

"Who has been sitting in my chair?"

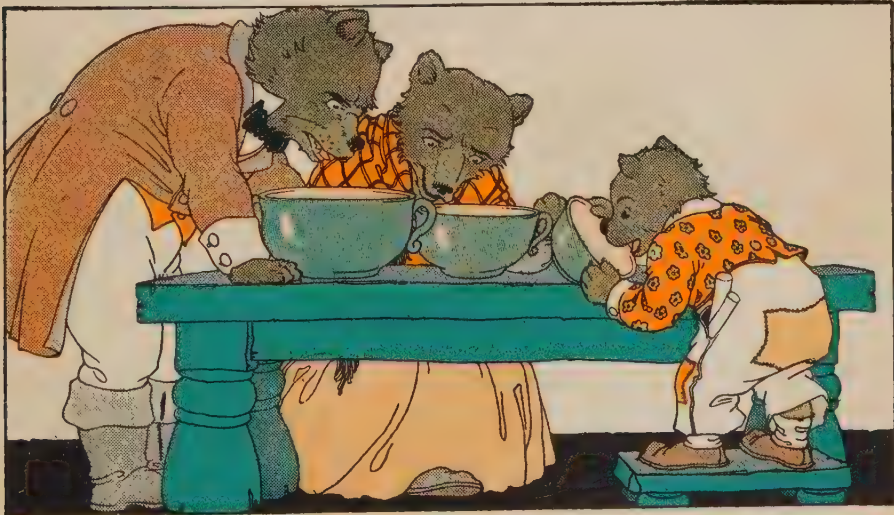
And the tiny, wee bear, when he saw what had happened to his chair, squealed in his tiny, wee voice,

"Who has been sitting in my chair and broken it all to pieces?"

So they all went into the bedroom, and when the great, huge bear saw his bed with the covers all crumpled up, he roared in his rough, gruff voice,

"WHO HAS BEEN LYING ON MY BED?"

And the middle-sized bear, when she saw her bed with



M Y B O O K H O U S E

the covers all crumpled up, cried in her middle-sized voice,
"Who has been lying on my bed?"

And the tiny, wee bear, when he looked at his bed,
squealed in his tiny, wee voice,

"Here she is! Here she is! Fast asleep in my little bed!"

His voice woke Goldilocks and she opened her eyes.

"GR—R—!" growled the great, huge bear in his rough,
gruff voice.

"Gr-r-r!" growled the middle-sized bear in her middle-
sized voice.

"Gr-r-r!" growled the tiny, wee bear in his tiny, wee voice.

When Goldilocks heard them all growling around her,
she was very sorry indeed that she hadn't stopped to
think before she entered their house and meddled with
their things. Before you could say, "Jack Robinson,"
she jumped out of bed, rushed to the window, climbed out,
and ran back home as fast as her legs would carry her.



HOW beautiful is the rain!
After the dust and heat,
In the broad and fiery street,
In the narrow lane,
How beautiful is the rain.

—Henry Wadsworth Longfellow



O MARY, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home,
Across the sands o' Dee!

—Charles Kingsley





YES, that's the girl that struts about,
 She's very proud,—so very proud!
 Her *bow-wow's* quite as proud as she;
 They both are very wrong to be
 So proud—so very proud.

See, Jane and Willy laugh at her,
 They say she's very proud!
 Says Jane, "My stars!—they're very silly;"
 "Indeed they are," cries little Willy,
 "To walk so stiff and proud."

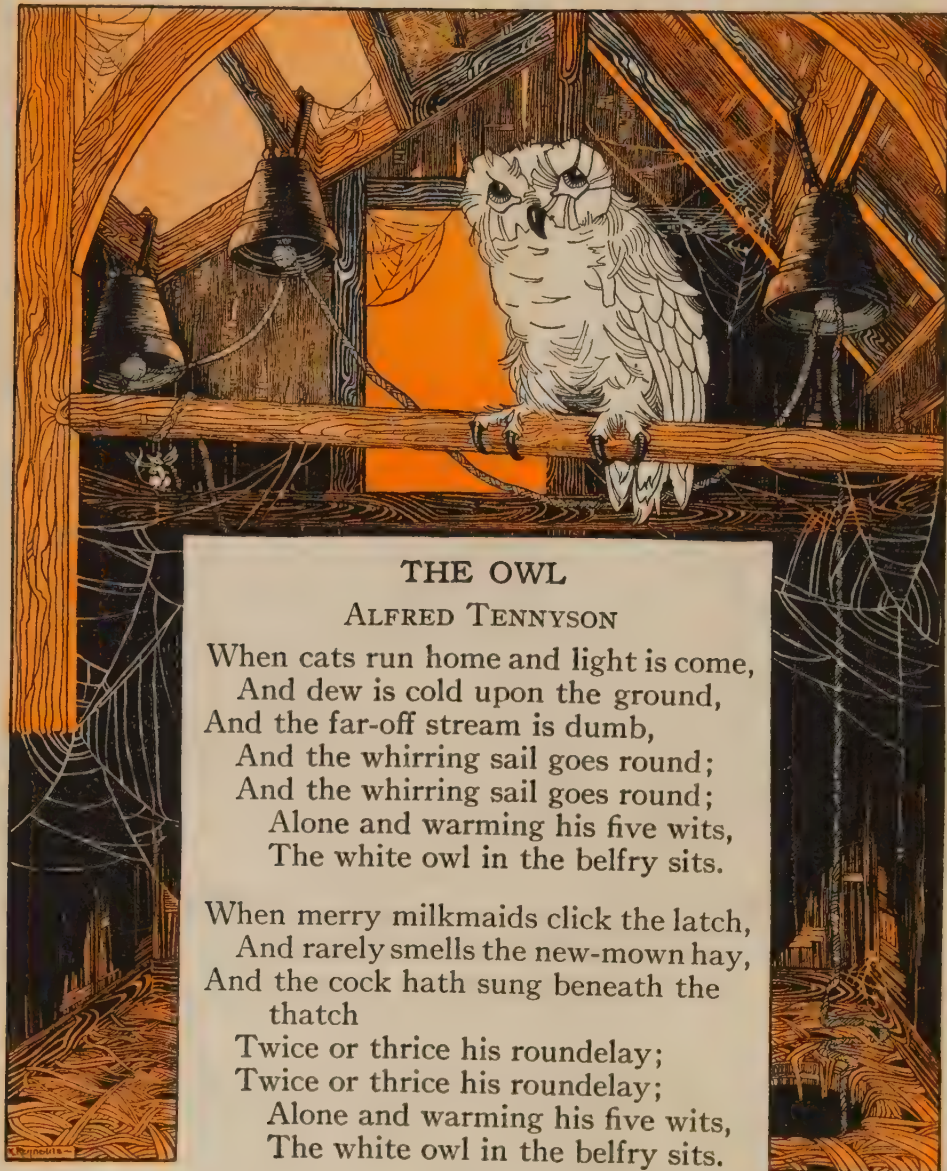
—Kate Greenaway*

*Kate Greenaway is always associated with the illustrators, Caldecott and Crane, and also with John Ruskin, author of *Dame Wiggins of Lee*. They were friends for years, and she wrote Ruskin letters decorated with her dainty drawings.



SCHOOL is over,
Oh, what fun!
Lessons finished,
Play begun.
Who'll run fastest,
You or I?
Who'll laugh loudest?
Let us try.
—Kate Greenaway*

*Kate Greenaway is famous for her charming little pictures of children. As she began to draw the quaint costumes, inspired by her love of English country people, she dressed dolls as models in order to experiment with color and style



THE OWL

ALFRED TENNYSON

When cats run home and light is come,
And dew is cold upon the ground,
And the far-off stream is dumb,
And the whirring sail goes round;
And the whirring sail goes round;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

When merry milkmaids click the latch,
And rarely smells the new-mown hay,
And the cock hath sung beneath the
thatch
Twice or thrice his roundelay;
Twice or thrice his roundelay;
Alone and warming his five wits,
The white owl in the belfry sits.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



The Owl's Answer to Tommy^{*}

JULIANA HORATIA EWING

ONE evening Tommy's grandmother was telling him and his little brother Johnny about a Brownie who used to do all the work in a neighbor's house before the family got up in the morning.

"What was he like, Granny?" asked Tommy.

"Like a little man, they say, my dear."

"What did he do?"

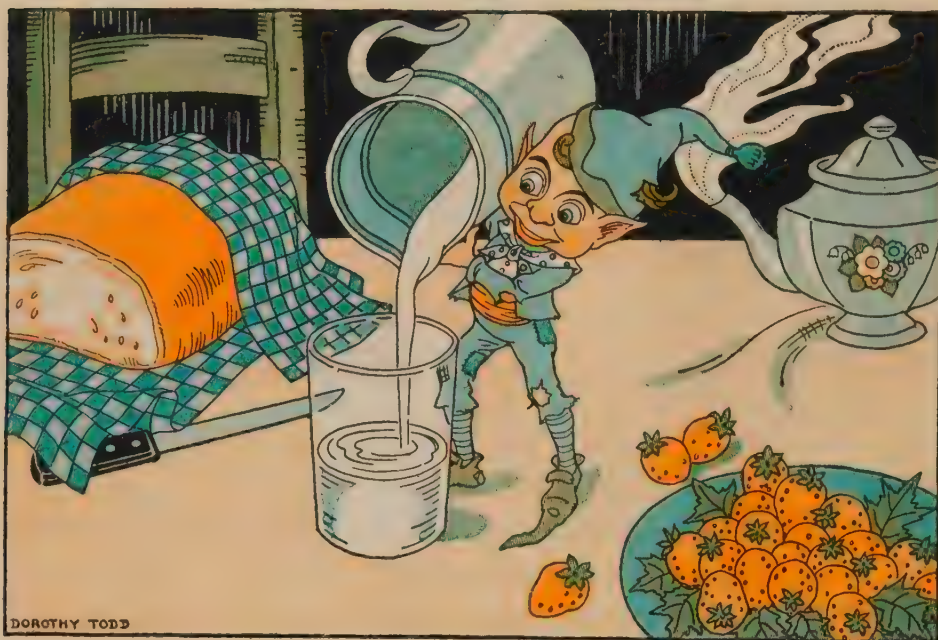
"He came in before the family was up, and swept up the hearth, and lighted the fire, and set out the breakfast and tidied the room, and did all sorts of housework. He never would be seen and was off before they could catch him. But they could hear him laughing and playing about the house sometimes."

"Did they give him any wages, Granny?"

"No, my dear. He did it for love. They set a pancheon of clear water for him overnight, and now and then a bowl

^{*}From *Brownies*, published by The Macmillan Company.

M Y B O O K H O U S E



of bread and milk or cream. Sometimes he left a bit of money in the water. Sometimes he weeded the garden or threshed the corn. He saved endless trouble both to men and maids."

"Oh, Granny! Why did he go?"

"The maids caught sight of him one night, my dear, and his coat was so ragged, that they got a new suit and a linen shirt for him, and laid them by the bread and milk bowl. But when Brownie saw the things, he put them on and, dancing round the kitchen, sang,

*"What have we here! Hemten hamten!
Here will I nevermore tread nor stampen."*

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

And away he danced through the door and never came back again."

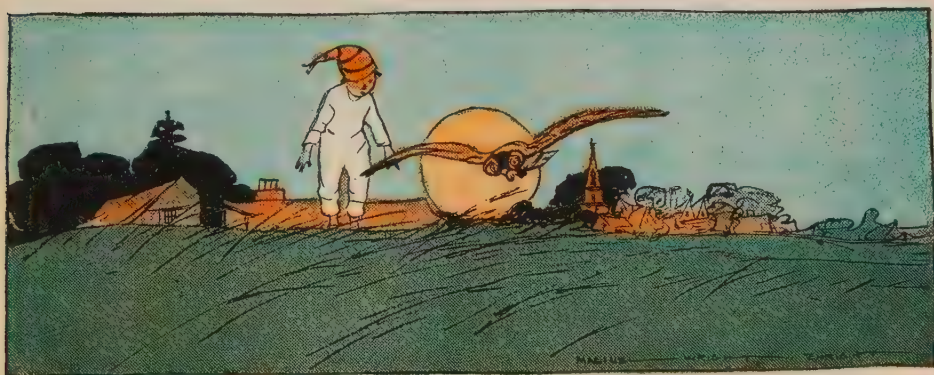
"Oh, Grandmother! But why didn't he come back?"

"The Old Owl knows, my dear, I don't. Ask her."

Now Tommy was a lazy boy. He wished that he could find a brownie to tidy the room, and fetch the turf, and pick up chips, and do all his work for him. So that night, while little Johnny was off in the land of dreams, growing rosier and rosier as he slept, Tommy lay wide awake, thinking of his grandmother's story.

"There's an owl living in the old shed by the lake," he thought. "It may be *the* Old Owl herself, and she knows, Granny says. When father's gone to bed and the moon rises, I'll go and ask her."

By and by the moon rose like gold and went up into the heavens like silver, flooding the fields with a pale, ghostly light. Tommy crept softly down the ladder, through the kitchen and out on the moor. It was a glorious night, though everything but the wind and Tommy seemed asleep.



M Y B O O K H O U S E

The stones, the walls, the gleaming lanes, were so intensely still, the church tower in the valley seemed awake and watching, but silent; the houses in the village round it had all their eyes shut; and it seemed to Tommy as if the very fields had drawn white sheets over them, and lay sleeping also.

"Hoot! hoot!" said a voice from the fir wood behind him. Somebody else was awake, then. "It's the Old Owl," said Tommy; and there she came swinging heavily across the moor with a flapping, stately flight, and sailed into the shed by the lake. The old lady moved faster than she appeared to do, and though Tommy ran hard she was in the shed some time before him. When he got in, no bird was to be seen, but he heard a sound from above, and there sat Old Owl, blinking at him—Tommy—with yellow eyes.

"Oh, dear!" said Tommy, for he didn't much like it.

"Come up, come up!" said she hoarsely.

She could speak then! Beyond all doubt it was *the* Old Owl, and none other.

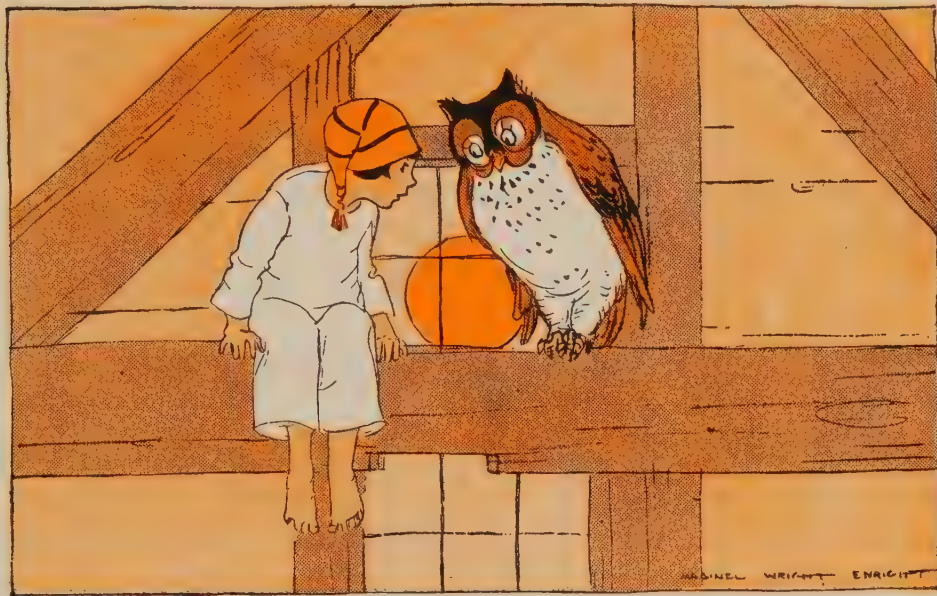
"Come up here! Come up here!" said the Old Owl.

Tommy had often climbed up for fun to the beam that ran across the shed where the Old Owl sat. He climbed up now, and sat face to face with her, and thought her eyes looked as if they were made of flame.

"Now, what do you want?" said the Owl.

"Please," said Tommy, "can you tell me where to find the brownies, and how to get one to come and live with us?"

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



"Oohoo!" said the Owl, "that's it, is it? I know of two brownies."

"Hurrah!" said Tommy. "Where do they live?"

"In your house," said the Owl.

Tommy was aghast.

"In our house!" he exclaimed. "Whereabouts? Let me rummage them out. Why do they do nothing?"

"One of them is too young," said the Owl.

"But why doesn't the other work?" asked Tommy.

"He is idle, he is idle," said the Old Owl, and she gave herself such a shake as she said it that the fluff went flying through the shed, and Tommy nearly tumbled off the beam.

"Then we don't want him," said he. "What is the use of

M Y B O O K H O U S E

having brownies if they do nothing to help us? But perhaps if you would tell me where to find them," said Tommy, "I could tell them what to do."

"Could you?" said the Owl. "Oohoo! Oohoo!" Tommy couldn't tell whether she were hooting or laughing.

"Of course I could," he said. "They might be up and sweep the house, and light the fire, and spread the table, and that sort of thing, before Father came down. The Brownie did all that in Granny's mother's young days. And they might tidy the room, and fetch the turf, and pick up my chips, and sort Granny's scraps. Oh! there's plenty to do."

"So there is," said the Owl. "Oohoo! Well, I can tell you where to find one of the brownies: and, if you can find him, he will tell you where his brother is. But all this depends upon whether you will follow my directions."

"I am quite ready to go," said Tommy, "and I will do as you tell me. I feel sure I could persuade them to come; if they only knew how every one would love them if they made themselves useful!"

"Oohoo! Oohoo!" said the Owl. "Now pay attention. You must go to the north side of the lake when the moon is shining—('I know brownies like water,' muttered Tommy)—and turn yourself round three times, saying this charm:

*'Twist me and turn me and show me the Elf—
I looked in the water and saw—'*

When you have got so far look into the water, and think

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



of a word that will rhyme with Elf, and at the same moment you will see the brownie."

"Is the brownie a merman," said Tommy, "that he lives under water?"

"That depends on whether he has a fish's tail," said the Owl, "and that you can see for yourself."

"Well, the moon is shining, so I shall go," said Tommy. "Good-by, and thank you, Ma'am." And he jumped down and went, saying to himself, "I believe he is a merman, all the same, or else how could he live in the lake?"

The moon shone very brightly on the center of the lake. Tommy knew the place well, for there was a fine echo there. Round the edges grew rushes and water plants, and, turning himself three times, as the Old Owl had told him, he repeated the charm:

M Y B O O K H O U S E

*"Twist me and turn me and show me the Elf—
I looked in the water and saw—"*

Now for it! He looked in—and saw his own face.

"Why, there's no one there but myself!" said Tommy.
"And what can the word be? I must have done it wrong."

"Wrong!" said the Echo.

Tommy was almost surprised to find the echo awake at this time of night.

"Much you know whether I'm wrong or not," said he. "Belf! Celf! Delf! Felf! Helf! Jelf! There can't be a word to fit the rhyme. And then to look for a brownie and see nothing but myself!"

"Myself," said the Echo.

"Will you be quiet?" said Tommy. "If you would tell me the word, there would be some sense in your interference; but to roar 'Myself!' at me, which neither rhymes nor runs—it does rhyme, though, as it happens," he added, "how very odd it runs, too!"

*"Twist me and turn me and show me the Elf—
I looked in the water and saw myself!"*

Which I certainly did. What can it mean? The Old Owl knows, as Granny would say; so I shall go back and ask her."

And back he went. There sat the Old Owl as before.

"Oohoo!" said she, as Tommy climbed up. "What did you see in the lake?"

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

"I saw nothing but myself," said Tommy, indignantly.

"And what did you expect to see?" asked the Owl.

"I expected to see a brownie," said Tommy, "you told me so."

"And what are brownies like, pray?" inquired the Owl.

"The one Granny knew was a useful little fellow, something like a little man," said Tommy.

"Ah!" said the Owl, "but you know at present this one is an idle fellow, something like a little man. Oohoo! Oohoo! Are you quite sure you didn't see him?"

"Quite," answered Tommy sharply, "I saw no one but myself."

"Hoot! Toot! How touchy we are! And who are you, pray?"

"I'm not a brownie," said Tommy.

"Don't be too sure," said the Owl. "Did you find out the word that rhymed with Elf?"

"No," said Tommy, "I could find no word with any meaning that would rhyme, except, 'myself.' "

"Well, if 'myself' rhymes," said the Owl, "what more do you want?"

"I don't understand," said Tommy humbly, "you know I'm not a brownie."

"Yes, you are," said the Owl, "and a very idle one, too. All children are brownies."

"But I couldn't do work like a brownie," said Tommy.

"Why not?" inquired the Owl. "Couldn't you sweep the floor, light the fire, spread the table, tidy the room, fetch

M Y B O O K H O U S E

the turf, pick up your own chips and sort your grandmother's scraps?"

"Please," said Tommy, "I should like to go home now and tell Johnny."

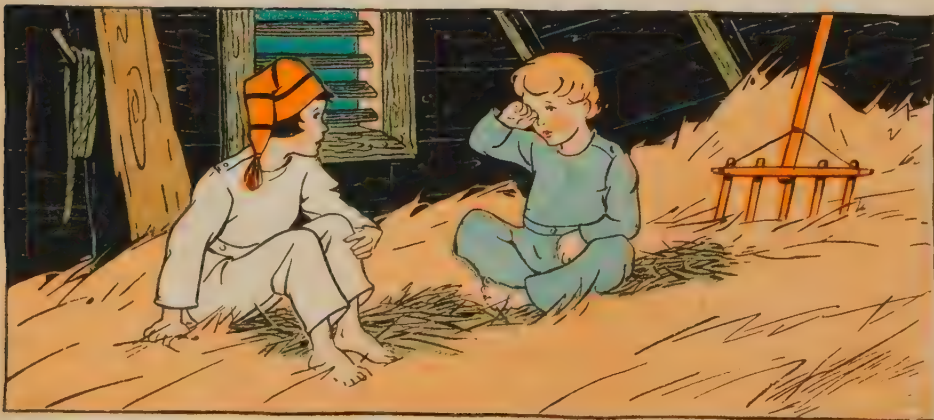
"Very well," said the Owl, "I think I had better take you."

"I know the way, thank you," said Tommy.

"Do as I say," said the Owl. "Lean your full weight against me and shut your eyes."

Tommy laid his head against the Owl's feathers. Down he sank and sank. He could feel nothing solid. He jumped with a start to save himself, opened his eyes, and found that he was sitting in the loft with Johnny sleeping by his side. And what was odder still, it was no longer moonlight, but early dawn. "Get up, Johnny, I've a story to tell you," he cried. And while Johnny sat up and rubbed his eyes, he told him all about it.

And after that Tommy and Johnny were the most useful little brownies in that whole country.





THE ELF AND THE DORMOUSE

OLIVER HERFORD

UNDER a toadstool crept a wee Elf,
Out of the rain, to shelter himself.

Under the toadstool sound asleep,
Sat a big Dormouse all in a heap.

Trembled the wee Elf, frightened, and yet
Fearing to fly away lest he get wet.

To the next shelter—maybe a mile!
Sudden the wee Elf smiled a wee smile.

Tugged till the toadstool toppled in two.
Holding it over him, gayly he flew.

Soon he was safe home, dry as could be.
Soon woke the Dormouse—"Good gracious me!"

"Where is my toadstool?" loud he lamented,
And that's how umbrellas first were invented



From *Artful Antics*; copyright, 1894. Used by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons

THE BROWNIES IN THE TOY SHOP*

PALMER COX

AS shades of evening settled down,
The Brownies rambled through the town,
To pry at this, to pause at that,
By something else to hold a chat,
And in their free and easy vein
Express themselves in language plain

At length before a store, their eyes
Were fixed with wonder and surprise
On toys of wood, and wax, and tin,
And toys of rubber piled within.
Said one, "In all our wandering 'round,
A sight like this we never found.
When such a passing glimpse we gain,
What wonders
must the shelves contain!"



*Palmer Cox's busy little brownies first appeared in the pages of *St. Nicholas* in the 1890's and were so loved by children that the chief characters were reproduced as dolls. By permission of The Century Co.

Another said, "It must be here
Old Santa Claus comes every year
To gather up his large supply,
When Christmas Eve is drawing nigh,
That children through the land may find
They still are treasured in his mind."



A third remarked, "Ere long he may
Again his yearly visit pay;
Before he comes to strip the place,
We'll rummage shelf, and box, and case,
Until the building we explore
From attic roof to basement floor,
And prove what pleasure may be found
In all the wonders stowed around."

Not long were they content to view
Through dusty panes those wonders new;
And, in a manner quite their own,
They made their way through wood and stone.

And then surprises met the band,
In odd conceits from every land.
Well might the Brownies stand and stare
At all the objects crowded there!
Here, things of gentle nature lay
In safety, midst the beasts of prey;
The goose and fox, a friendly pair,
Reposed beside the lamb and bear.

There horses stood for boys to ride;
Here boats were waiting for the tide,
While ships of war, with every sail
Unfurled, were anchored to a nail;
There soldiers stood in warlike bands;
And naked dolls held out their hands,
As though to urge the passers-by
To take them from the public eye.
This way and that, the Brownies ran;
To try the toys they soon began.



The Jack-in-box, so quick and strong,
 With staring eyes and whiskers long,
 Now o'er and o'er was set and sprung
 Until the scalp was from it flung;
 And then they crammed him in his case,
 With wig and night-cap in their place,
 To give some customer a start
 When next the jumper flew apart.
 The trumpets, drums, and weapons bright*
 Soon filled them all with great delight.



Like troops preparing for their foes,
 In single ranks and double rows,
 They learned the arts of war, as told
 By printed books and veterans old;
 With swords of tin and guns of wood,
 They wheeled about,
 and marched or stood,
 And went through skirmish drill and all,
 From room to room by bugle-call;



*In *The Toy Symphony*, Joseph Haydn (1732-1809), the teacher of Mozart and Beethoven, wrote a part for the toys and bird calls he loved as a boy. You can hear the drum, the bells, the cuckoo, the bob-white, and the nightingale.

The music-box poured forth an air
That charmed the dullest spirits there,
Till, yielding to the pleasing sound,
They danced with dolls a lively round.*



There fish were working tail and fin
In seas confined by wood and tin;
The canvas shark and rubber whale
Seemed ill content in dish or pail,
And leaping all obstructions o'er
Performed their antics on the floor.

More gave the singing tops no rest—
But kept them spinning at their best
Until some wonder strange and new
To other points attention drew.



Some found at marbles greatest fun,
And still they played, and still they won,
Until they claimed as winners, all
The shop could furnish, large and small.

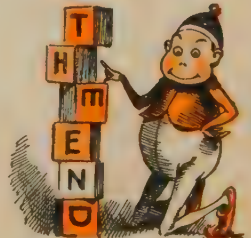
*The *Waltzing Doll* (*Poupée Valsante*) by the Viennese pianist, Edward Poldini, is a charming little imitation of a dancing doll.



The rocking-horse that wildly rose,
 Now on its heels, now on its nose,
 Was forced to bear so great a load,
 It seemed to founder on the road,
 Then tumble feebly to the floor,
 Never to lift a rocker more.

'Twas hardly missed in such a store,
 With wonders fairly running o'er;
 To something else about the place
 The happy Brownie turned his face,
 And only feared the sun would call
 Before he'd had his sport with all.

Thus, through the shop in greatest glee,
 They rattled 'round, the sights to see,
 Till stars began to dwindle down,
 And morning crept into the town.
 And then, with all the speed they knew,
 Away to forest shades they flew.



NEW YEAR'S DAY
OLIVE BEAUPRE' MILLER

ON New Year's Day the children laugh
And never, never cry,
Glad bells ring out their ding-dong-ding,
This is the reason why—

The people sat around last night,
The clock went tick, tick, tock,
And lo, a tiny stranger came
To earth at twelve o'clock.

Grandpa Old Year ran away,
He ran away in flight;
Little Baby New Year 'twas,
Who came to earth last night!





THE CIRCUS PARADE★ OLIVE BEAUPRÉ MILLER

O GOODY, it's coming, the circus parade
And all the way up the street,
What crowds of people in gay-colored clothes,
With popcorn and peanuts to eat!

The children have red, blue, and yellow balloons,
As up by the curbing they stand,
And now, in the distance, we suddenly hear
The circus's big brass band!

*The marches of the American March King, John Philip Sousa, especially *The Stars and Stripes Forever*, have been played by the brilliantly-dressed circus band for many a circus parade.



Behind the crash-bang! of the music they play,
 Come riders in red velvet gowns,
 And after them doing the funniest things,
 A silly procession of clowns.

Then lions and tigers that pace up and down,
 In wagons all painted with gold,
 And monkeys a-playing just all kinds of tricks,
 As they grimace and chatter and scold.

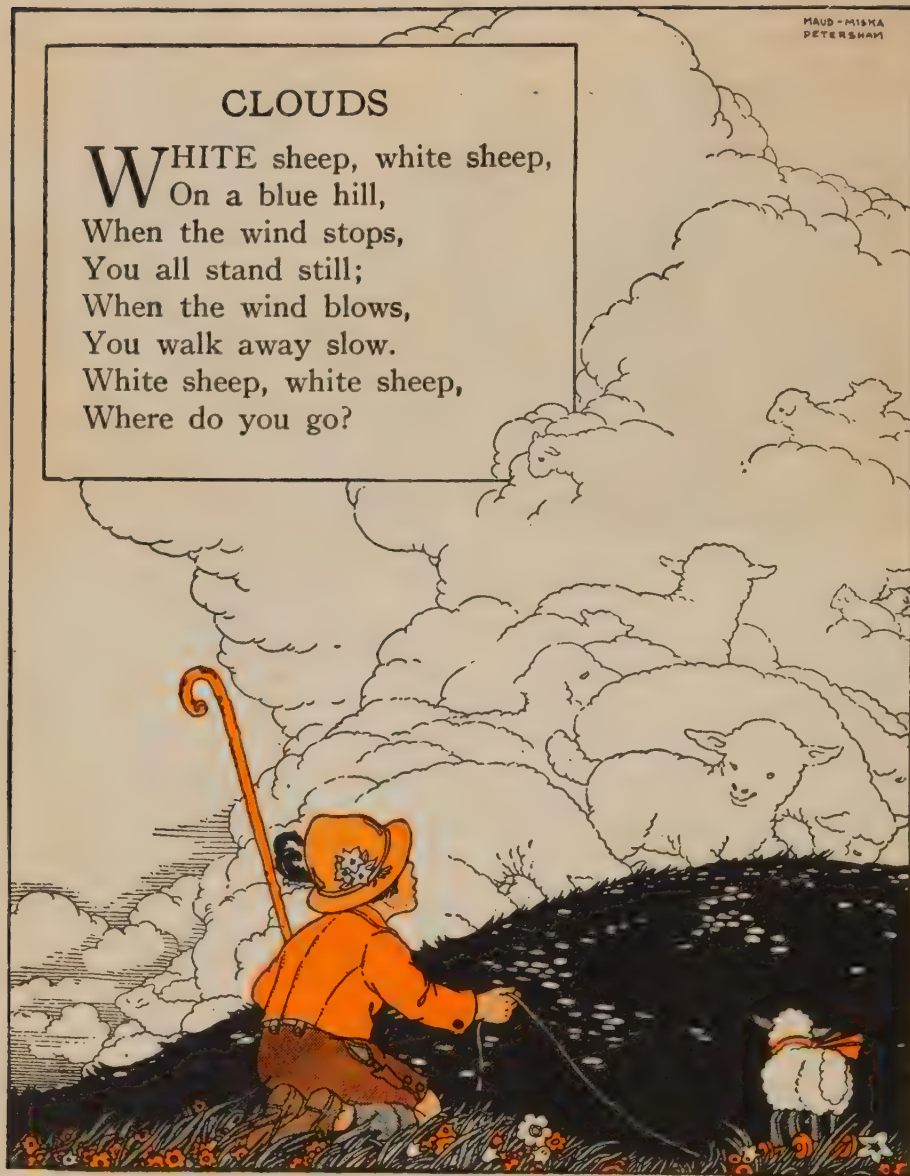
O, next there come camels and elephants, too,
 High on their backs men ride;
 There are queer little ponies, no bigger than dogs,
 With a clown on a donkey, beside!

And then there come chariots rumbling by
 With horses all four in a row;
 And the wheezing, old, piping calliope is
 The very tail end of the show!



CLOUDS

WHITE sheep, white sheep,
On a blue hill,
When the wind stops,
You all stand still;
When the wind blows,
You walk away slow.
White sheep, white sheep,
Where do you go?



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



Peter Rabbit Decides to Change His Name

THORNTON W. BURGESS

PETER RABBIT! Peter Rabbit! I don't see what Mother Nature ever gave me such a common-sounding name as that for. People laugh at me, but if I had a fine-sounding name they wouldn't laugh. Some folks say that a name doesn't amount to anything, but it does. If I should do some wonderful thing, nobody would think anything of it. No, sir, nobody would think anything of it at all just because—why just because it was done by Peter Rabbit."

Peter was talking out loud, but he was talking to himself. He sat in the dear Old Briar-patch with an ugly scowl on his usually happy face. The sun was shining;

From *The Adventures of Peter Cottontail*. Used by special arrangement with the author and publishers, Little, Brown & Company.

M Y B O O K H O U S E

the Merry Little Breezes of Old Mother West Wind were dancing over the Green Meadows; the birds were singing; and happiness, the glad, joyous happiness of springtime, was everywhere but in Peter Rabbit's heart. There, there seemed to be no room for anything but discontent. And such foolish discontent—discontent with his name! And yet, do you know, there are lots of little people just as foolish as Peter Rabbit.

"Well, what are you going to do about it?"

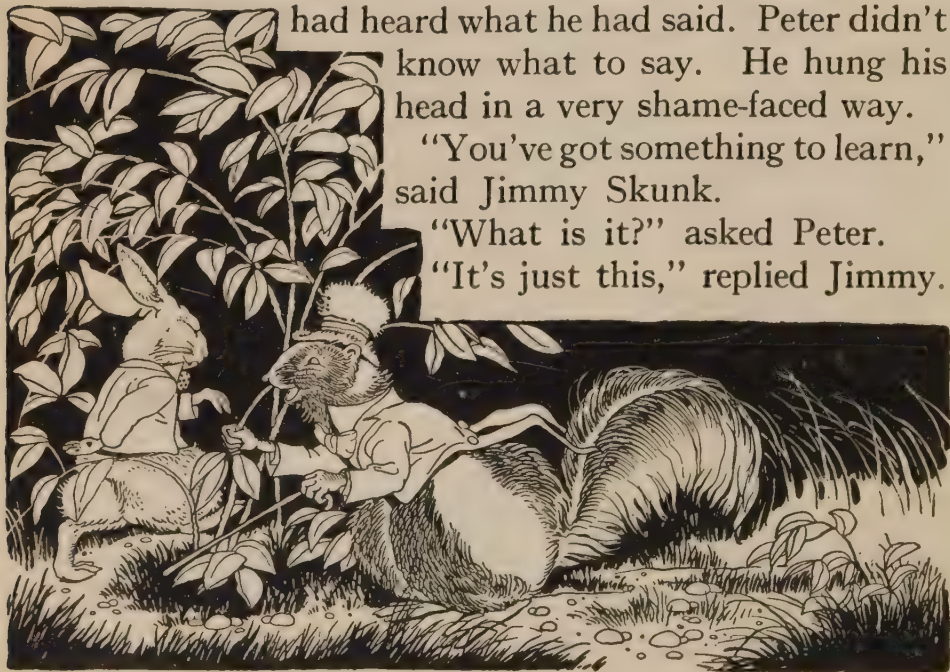
The voice made Peter jump and turn around hastily. There was Jimmy Skunk poking his head in at the opening of one of Peter's private little paths. He was grinning, and Peter knew by that grin that Jimmy

had heard what he had said. Peter didn't know what to say. He hung his head in a very shame-faced way.

"You've got something to learn," said Jimmy Skunk.

"What is it?" asked Peter.

"It's just this," replied Jimmy.



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

"There's nothing in a name except

Just what we choose to make it.
It lies with us and no one else
How other folks shall take it.
It's what we do and what we say
And how we live each passing day
That makes it big or makes it small
Or even worse than none at all.
A name just stands for what we are;
It's what we choose to make it.
And that's the way and only way
That other folks will take it."



Peter Rabbit made a face at Jimmy Skunk. "I don't like being preached to."

"I'm not preaching; I'm just telling you what you ought to know without being told," replied Jimmy Skunk. "If you don't like your name, why don't you change it?"

"What's that?" cried Peter sharply.

"If you don't like your name, why don't you change it?" repeated Jimmy.

Peter sat up and the disagreeable frown had left his face. "I—I—hadn't thought of that," he said slowly. "Do you suppose I could, Jimmy Skunk?"

"Easiest thing in the world," replied Jimmy Skunk. "Just decide what name you like and then ask all your friends to call you by it."

"I believe I will!" cried Peter Rabbit.

M Y B O O K H O U S E



“Well, let me know what it is when you have decided,” said Jimmy, as he started for home. And all the way up the Crooked Little Path, Jimmy chuckled to himself as he thought of Foolish Peter Rabbit trying to change his name.

Peter Rabbit had quite lost his appetite. When Peter forgets to eat you may make up your mind that Peter has something

very important to think about. At least he has something on his mind that he thinks is important. The fact is, Peter had fully made up his mind to change his name. He thought Peter Rabbit too common a name. But, when he tried to think of a better one, he found that no name that he could think of really pleased him anymore. So he thought, and he thought, and he thought, and he thought.

Now Jimmy Skunk was the only one to whom Peter had told how discontented he was with his name, and it was Jimmy who had suggested to Peter that he change it. Jimmy thought it a great joke, and he straightway passed the word along among all the little meadow and forest people that Peter Rabbit was going to change his name.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

Everybody laughed and chuckled over the thought of Peter Rabbit's foolishness, and they planned to have a great deal of fun with Peter as soon as he should tell them his new name.

Peter was sitting on the edge of the Old Briar-patch one morning when Ol' Mistah Buzzard passed, flying low.



"Good mo'ning, Brer Cottontail," said Ol' Mistah Buzzard, with a twinkle in his eye.

At first Peter didn't understand that Ol' Mistah Buzzard was speaking to him, and, by the time he did, it was too late to reply for Ol' Mistah Buzzard was way, way up in the blue, blue sky.

"Cottontail, Cottontail," said Peter over and over to himself and began to smile. Every time he said it, he liked it better. "Cottontail, Peter Cottontail! How much better sounding that is than Peter Rabbit! That sounds as if I really was somebody. Yes, Sir, that's the very name I want. Now I must send word to all my friends that hereafter I am no longer Peter Rabbit, but Peter Cottontail."

Peter kicked up his heels in just the funny way he always does when he is pleased.

Suddenly he remembered that such a fine, long,

M Y B O O K H O U S E

high-sounding name as Peter Cottontail demanded dignity. So he stopped kicking up his heels and began to practice putting on airs. But first he called to the Merry Little Breezes and told them about his change of name and asked them to tell all his friends that, in the future, he would not answer to the name of Peter Rabbit, but only to the name of Peter Cottontail. He was very grave, and earnest, and important, as he explained it to the Merry Little Breezes. The Merry Little Breezes kept their faces straight while he was talking, but as soon as they had left him to carry his message, they burst out laughing. It was such a joke!

And they giggled as they delivered his message to each of the little forest and meadow people:

“Peter Rabbit’s changed his name.
In future without fail
You must call him, if you please,
Mr. Peter Cottontail.”

While they were doing this, Peter was back in the Old Briar-patch practicing new airs and trying to look very high and mighty and important, as became one with such a fine-sounding name as Peter Cottontail.

Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk had their heads together. Now when these two put their heads together, you may make up your mind that they are planning mischief. Yes, sir, there is sure to be

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



mischief afoot when Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk put their heads together as they were doing now. Had Peter Rabbit seen them, he might not have felt so easy in his mind as he did. But Peter didn't see them. He was too much taken up with trying to look as important as his new name sounded. He was putting on airs and holding his head very high as he went down to the Smiling Pool to call on Jerry Muskrat. Whenever anyone called him by his first name, Peter pretended not to hear. He pretended that he had never heard that name and didn't know that he was being spoken to.

Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk thought it a great joke and they made up their minds that they would have some fun with Peter and, perhaps, make him see how foolish he was. Yes, sir, they planned to teach Peter a lesson. Bobby Coon hurried away to find Reddy Fox

M Y B O O K H O U S E

and tell him that Peter had gone down to the Smiling Pool and that, if he hid beside the path, he might catch Peter on the way back. Jimmy Skunk hunted up Blacky the Crow and Sammy Jay and told them of his plan and what he wanted them to do. Of course they promised that they would. Then he went to Ol' Mistah Buzzard and told him. Ol' Mistah Buzzard grinned and promised that he would do his share. Then Bobby Coon and Jimmy Skunk hid where they could see all that would happen.

Peter reached the Smiling Pool and now sat on the bank admiring his own reflection in the water and talking to Jerry Muskrat. He had just told Jerry that when his old name was called out he didn't hear it anymore, when



along came Blacky the Crow.

"Hello, Peter Rabbit! You're just the fellow I am looking for; I've a very important message for you," shouted Blacky.

Peter kept right on talking with Jerry Muskrat, just as if he didn't hear, although he was burning with curiosity to know what the message was.

"I say, Peter Rabbit, are you deaf?" shouted Blacky the Crow. Jerry

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



Muskrat looked up at Blacky and winked. "Peter Rabbit isn't here," said he. "This is Peter Cottontail."

"Oh!" said Blacky. "My message is for Peter Rabbit, and it's something he really ought to know. I'm sorry he isn't here." And with that, away flew Blacky the Crow, chuckling to himself.

Peter looked quite as uncomfortable as he felt, but of course he couldn't say a word after boasting that he didn't hear people who called him Peter Rabbit. Pretty soon along came Sammy Jay. Sammy seemed very much excited.

"Oh, Peter Rabbit, I'm so glad I've found you!" he cried. "I've some very important news for you!"

Peter had all he could do to sit still and pretend not to hear, but he did.

"This is Peter Cottontail," said Jerry Muskrat, winking at Sammy Jay.

"Oh," replied Sammy, "my news is for Peter Rabbit," and off he flew, chuckling to himself.

M Y B O O K H O U S E

Peter looked and felt more uncomfortable than ever. He bade Jerry Muskrat good-day and started for the dear Old Briar-patch to think things over. When he was half-way there, Ol' Mistah Buzzard came sailing down out of the sky.

"Brer Cottontail," said he, "if yo' see anything of Brer Rabbit, yo' tell him that Brer Fox am hiding behind the big bunch of grass just ahead."

Peter stopped short, and his heart gave a great leap. There, behind the clump of grass, was something red, sure enough. Peter didn't wait to see more. He started for a hiding-place he knew of in the Green Forest as fast as he could go, and behind him raced Reddy Fox. As he ran, he heard Blacky the Crow and Sammy Jay laughing; and then he knew that this was the news that they had had for him.

"I—I—guess that Peter Rabbit is a good enough name, after all," he panted.



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

The Battle of the Firefly and the Apes

A FILIPINO TALE

WHEN the sun goes down in the Philippine Islands, darkness comes quickly and the myriad little lamps of the fireflies begin to glimmer among the trees. One evening, a firefly went to visit a friend. As he flew quietly along, carrying his little lamp and minding his own affairs, he met an ape. Said the ape, "Ho, ho, Mr. Firefly, why do you always carry a light?"

"I carry a light so that I can see the mosquitoes and keep out of their way," answered the firefly.

"Keep out of the way of the mosquitoes!" cried the ape. "You coward! You're afraid of the mosquitoes!"

"I'm not a coward! I'm not afraid of the mosquitoes!" said the firefly. "I go my way and mind my own affairs, and I leave the mosquitoes alone to go their way."

But the ape insisted that the firefly was afraid; and, the next day, he told all his ape friends that the firefly carried a lamp because he was a coward. So all the apes laughed and made sport of the firefly.

Now the firefly soon heard what Mr. Ape had said and how all the apes were laughing at him, so he resolved to teach them a lesson. He hurried off at once to Mr. Ape's house. Mr. Ape was asleep, but the firefly flashed his lamp in his face and woke him with a start.

"Why did you tell everyone that I was a coward?" he demanded. "Tomorrow come to the plaza and there, in

M Y B O O K H O U S E

the sight of everyone, we will prove whether I am a coward!"

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed the ape, "so you're offering to fight with *me*? Well, who are you going to bring to help you? One of your size will scarcely stand up alone against such a powerful creature as I am!"

"I shall come alone," said the firefly.

"Come alone! That's good!" cried the ape. "I shall bring a whole company of apes! I shall have a thousand at least—each one as big as myself! Then we shall see what will happen to you if you dare to come alone!"

So Mr. Ape ordered each of his friends to get a great club and meet him on the plaza. They all came in a crowd, but they found the one small firefly waiting there alone. Mr. Ape drew his company up in line and put himself at their head, then he fiercely gave the order to go forward against the firefly. But the firefly swiftly flew over and lit on the great ape's nose. The ape, who stood next in line, struck savagely at the firefly but the firefly darted nimbly out of reach, so the club missed him altogether and fell square on the great ape's nose! Flat fell Mr. Ape to the ground!

Then the firefly hurried to the second ape's nose. The third ape struck at his foe, but the firefly dodged out of the way just as he had before and the blow fell square on the second ape's nose! He, too, fell flat to the earth!

So it went on all down the line of apes. Each ape aimed his club at the firefly on his neighbor's nose, each ape missed the firefly and knocked his neighbor flat. Over they

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



bowled, one after another, just like a row of ninepins.

At last the firefly was left victorious over every one of his fallen foes! "Who now can say that the firefly is afraid?" he cried.

The apes cowered, shamefaced, on the ground with never a word to say. But the firefly flew quietly away, to mind his own affairs as before.

TWINKLING BUGS*

WHEN the sun sinks under the world's red rim,
And the river fades till its shores are dim,
And the trees are dark where the shadows lie,
Then they go by,
By,
By,
The twinkling bugs go by.

*In *Little Firefly*, Charles Wakefield Cadman, American composer of music inspired by Indian themes, paints a dainty picture of the firefly as it flits here and there, flashing its little light through the dark night on the prairie.

An Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog

By OLIVER GOLDSMITH

*Illustrated by Randolph Caldecott**

GOOD people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song;
And if you find it wondrous short,



It cannot hold you long.



*Born in 1846, the same year as Kate Greenaway, Randolph Caldecott, who illustrated this story, was one of the masters of English illustration. He loved country life, fishing, hunting, markets, and fairs, and he put his rollicking gayety and humor into his picture books for children. His horses and hunting scenes have never been equalled.



In Islington there lived a man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,

Whene'er he went

to pray.



Oliver Goldsmith, who wrote this poem, was the kindly Old Noll, beloved by English children in the middle 1700's. He assisted John Newbery, the first publisher of children's books designed to give children joy rather than to preach at them. Newbery made gay little books bound in flowered gilt paper and often hand-colored by children. Goldsmith wrote many such books to which he did not sign his name.



A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,



When he put on

his clothes.





And in that town a dog was found:
As many dogs there be—



Both mongrel,

puppy,

whelp,

and hound,



And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first
were friends



But, when a pique began,



The dog, to gain some private ends,



Went mad, and bit the man.



Around from all





the neighbouring streets

The wondering neighbours ran;





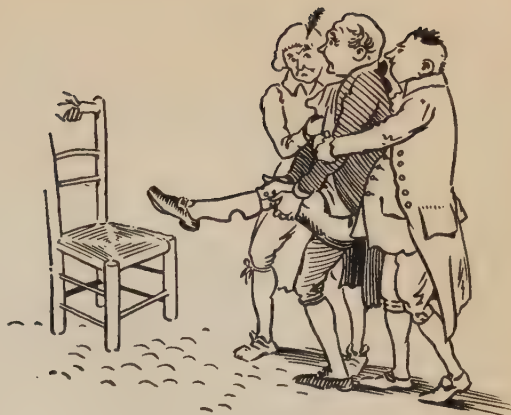


And swore the dog had lost his wits,

To bite so good a man.



The wound it seem'd
Both sore and sad
To every Christian eye;



And while they swore the dog was mad,



They swore the man would die

But soon a wonder came to light,
That show'd the rogues they lied—
The man recover'd of the bite;





The dog it was—
that died.



The Foolish, Timid, Little Hare

AN EAST INDIAN FABLE

ONCE there was a foolish, timid, little Hare, who was always expecting something awful to happen. She was forever saying, "Suppose the earth were to crack and swallow me up!" She said this over and over again till at last she really believed the earth was about to crack and swallow her up.

One day she was asleep under a palm tree when some Monkeys above dropped a cocoanut down. The little Hare didn't see the cocoanut, but she heard its thud on the ground. Up she jumped in a hurry and cried: "Dear me! The earth is surely cracking!" And she ran away as fast as she could, without ever looking behind her.

Presently she met an older Hare, who called out after her, "Why are you running so fast?"

The foolish, timid, little Hare answered, "The earth is cracking and I'm running away, so as not to be swallowed up!"

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

"Is that it?" cried the second Hare. "Dear me! Then I'll run away too!" and off he dashed beside her. Soon they met another Hare; they told him the earth was cracking, and off he dashed beside them. So it went on, till at last there were a hundred-thousand Hares all running away as fast as they could.



By and by the Hares met a Deer.

"Why are you all running so fast?" asked the Deer.

"The earth is cracking!" they wailed. "We're running away so as not to be swallowed up!"

"The earth is cracking? Oh, dear me!" cried the Deer, and she bounded after the crowd as fast as she could go.

A little farther on, they passed a Tiger.

"Why are you all running so fast?" called the Tiger.

"The earth is cracking!" the fearful ones wailed. "And we're running away so as not to be swallowed up!"

"The earth is cracking? Oh, dear me!" howled the Tiger, and he leapt away after the crowd as fast as he could go.

In a few minutes more, they met an Elephant.

"Why are you all running so fast?" asked the Elephant.

"The earth is cracking!" the fearful ones wailed. "And we're running away so as not to be swallowed up!"

"The earth is cracking? Oh, dear me!" trumpeted the Elephant, and he lumbered off after the crowd as fast as he could go.

At last the wise King Lion saw the animals running

M Y B O O K H O U S E

pell-mell, head over heels in a crazy crowd, and he heard them cry, "The earth is cracking!" Then he ran out boldly before them and roared three times till they halted.

"What is this you are saying?" he cried.

"Oh, King!" they answered. "The earth is cracking! We'll all be swallowed up!"

"Hoity-toity!" roared King Lion. "Let's take time to find out if such a thing could be true. Who was it that saw the earth crack?"

"Not I," said the Elephant. "Ask the Tiger! He told me!"

"Not I," said the Tiger. "Ask the Deer! She told me!"

"Not I," said the Deer. "Ask the Hares! They told me!"

So every single animal said he had not been the one to see the earth crack and he pointed out someone else who



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

had told him all about it. When it came to the Hares, they pointed to the one foolish, timid, little Hare, who stood by shivering and shaking. "She told us," they all cried.

Then the Lion said, "Little Hare, what made you say the earth was cracking?"

"I heard it crack," said the Hare.

"Where did you hear it crack?" asked the Lion.

"By the big palm tree. I was fast asleep, and I woke up and thought, 'Oh, dear me! Suppose the earth should crack and swallow me up!' Just then I heard a cracking noise, as loud—as loud as thunder—and away I ran as fast as I could."

"Well," said the Lion, "you and I will go back to the place where the earth is cracking and see what is the matter."



M Y B O O K H O U S E

"No, no, no!" cried the foolish, timid, little Hare. "I would not go there again for anything in the world."

"But," said the Lion, "I will take you on my back." So at last the foolish, timid, little Hare got up on the Lion's back and away they went like the wind, till they came to the Palm Tree. No sooner had they arrived than they heard a loud thud—the Monkeys threw down another cocoanut! And there they had the secret at last! At last the Hare understood how nothing but a falling cocoanut had made her think the earth was cracking. So the foolish, timid, little Hare went back to the other animals and said, "The earth is *not* cracking."

"Well! Well! Well!" said the Elephant. "You don't say! So the earth is *not* cracking after all!" And he lumbered off into the forest.

Thus every one of the animals went back into the forest, and that was the end of the earthquake.



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

The Right Time to Laugh

AN AUSTRALIAN TALE

IN A DENSE Australian thicket, a lyrebird scratching in the ground, once found a choice bit of food. So he spread his tail and rejoiced.

Just then along came a frog. "Good morning, friend," said the frog, and he sat very solemnly by, waiting to be invited to eat a share of the feast. But the lyrebird took his food and flew up into a tree.

"My friend," said the frog, feeling injured, "yesterday you dined with me, haven't you one morsel to spare for me today?"

"Certainly!" said the lyrebird, for he did not wish to appear so greedy as he was! "You may have a bite of my food. Just come right up and get it!"

"I can't come up," said the frog. "I've no wings with which to fly, and my feet were not made for climbing."

But the lyrebird, looking about, spied a vine trailing down from the tree with one end on the ground.

"Take hold of the vine," said he, "and I will pull you up." So the frog caught hold of the vine and the lyrebird



M Y B O O K H O U S E

pulled him up slowly until he was on a level with the branch where the lyrebird was sitting.

"I thank you, my friend," said the frog, and he was about to hop down beside the food he desired, when the lyrebird let go of the vine and dropped the frog—plump!—to the ground. Then the lyrebird, thinking he had played a very fine joke on his friend, laughed and laughed and laughed and he ate his dinner up all by himself.

But the frog, sorely disappointed, sat down below and thought of the injury which had been done him until he could see nothing else.

"The lyrebird played a wicked prank at my expense," said he, "and I shall repay him as he deserves."

So he hopped to the neighboring river, where the lyrebird got his water, and he drank and drank and drank. He drank till he swallowed not only all the water in that river, but all the water in all the rivers and all the lakes in Australia! Then he sat, quite puffed out with the water he had swallowed, and solemnly blinked his eyes.

Soon the lyrebird wanted a drink; but where was he to get it? There wasn't a river to turn to! The lyrebird got thirstier and thirstier until he was half-crazy for want of a drink of water. At last he was sufficiently punished for the wicked prank he had played to be very sorry for what he had done. And alas! he was not punished for the wrong he had done alone. All the birds and beasts in the whole of Australia suffered. One by one, they went to the frog and begged him to give out the waters. Dingo,

U P O N E P A I R O F S T A I R S

the wild dog, went; Spiny, the anteater, went; Flying-fox, the great bat, went. And they said:

"Great frog, the lyrebird has done you wrong, but now he is very sorry and you are making us suffer who did you no wrong at all. Give forth the waters, we pray you."

But still the great frog sulked and would not answer a word. Then the lyrebird himself went before him and humbly begged his pardon. But the frog held, stubborn as ever, to the memory of his wrongs and he would not forgive the lyrebird. He sat as puffed up as before and solemnly blinked his eyes.

Then the great black swan went before him, and the white eagle, and the emu, and all the other birds and beasts. But no matter how they besought him, he would not give back the water. So at length the birds and the beasts all got together and said:

"If the old frog only knew how ridiculous he is sulking away like that, he would laugh at himself; then the waters would gush from his mouth."

"Ah!" cried the anteater. "If that is the case, let us *make* him laugh and give up the rivers."

So they all stood in a circle about the solemn old frog and performed their funniest antics. First, they brought out the duck-billed mole, and a funny enough fellow he was! They backed him up to the frog and from the mole's furry back, Mr. Frog expected, of course, to see the face of a beast. Then they turned the mole around quickly. Lo, there was the face of a bird with a flat,

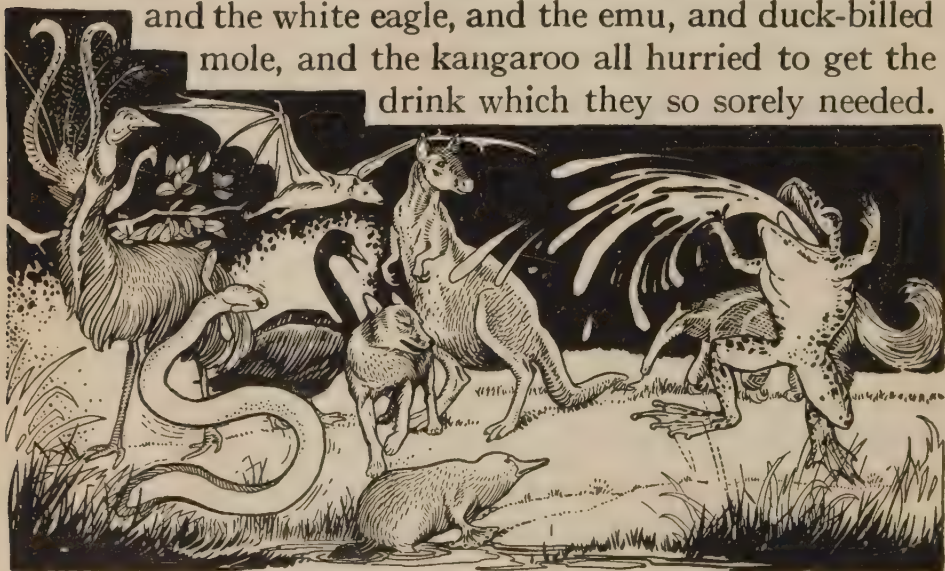
M Y B O O K H O U S E

absurd bill like a duck's in the place where his snout ought to be! But the frog never smiled the least smile.

At last they brought out an eel, and that was a happy thought. The eel stood up on the tip of his long, long tail and he danced. He wiggled and wriggled and twisted. At that, the corners of the frog's mouth began all at once to turn up, his lips began to twitch, his nose began to wrinkle, and all of a sudden—Hah! He opened his mouth big and wide and he let out a mighty laugh. He laughed and he laughed and he laughed; and, as he laughed, the waters gushed forth from his mouth and filled up all the rivers and all the lakes in Australia.

"I was a silly old frog to sulk like that!" he cried.

Then the lyrebird, and the wild dog, and the anteater, and the flying-fox, and the opossum, and the black swan, and the white eagle, and the emu, and duck-billed mole, and the kangaroo all hurried to get the drink which they so sorely needed.



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

Little Half-Chick

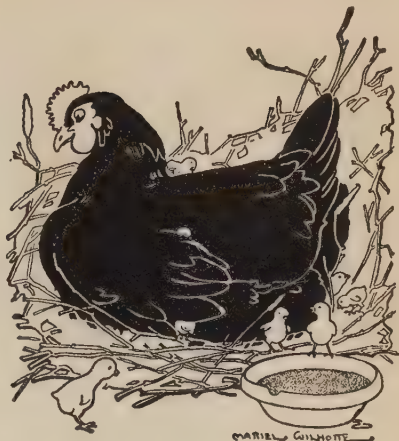
A SPANISH FOLK TALE

ONCE there was a hen who made a nest for herself in a sunny farmyard in Spain. There she raised a brood of chicks. Fluffy and yellow and beautiful, they pecked their way out of their shells. Very good little chicks they were, too—all but one, that is—and he, dear me, dear me! When his mother called, “Cluck! Cluck! Cluck!” he never did what she told him. When she bade him come here, he went there; when she bade him do this, he did that! He snatched choice bits of food away from his brothers and sisters and he wanted his own way in all things.

One day Mother Hen noticed that this naughty little chick was really only a half-chick. He had only half a head, half a body, half a tail, one eye, one wing, and one leg!

“Dear me!” clucked Mother Hen. “What in the world is the matter? How did my chick ever come to be such a queer little fellow?”

But very soon it was plain even to good Mother Hen why this chick was only a half-chick. No matter how she tried to teach him to do what was right, he only tossed his half-head, flipped his little half-tail and did exactly as he chose. “Dear me!” said Mother Hen sadly.



M Y B O O K H O U S E



One day Little Half-Chick came hopping up to his mother—stump, stump, stump on his one little leg.

“Good-bye, mother!” he said, “I’m off to the city to see the King!”

“Off to the city!” cried poor Mother Hen. “Why you haven’t even learned yet how

to behave in a farmyard! You’ll never get on in the city. Stay here and learn from me, and, who knows, you may still grow to be a whole chick!”

But Little Half-Chick only tossed his little half-head and flipped his little half-tail.

“I know enough,” he said, “without any teaching from you! Life here is too quiet for me! I’m off to see the King!”

And away he went, stump, stump, stump!

Over hill, over dale, on, on, hopped Little Half-Chick—stump, stump, stump, up the highway!

At length he saw a little brook, all choked up with weeds, that held it there a prisoner, so it could not laugh and run and go leaping on its way.

“Oh, Little Half-Chick,” the water murmured, “the weeds have bound me fast. Please stop and pull them away that I may laugh and run.”

But Little Half-Chick only tossed his little half-head and flipped his little half-tail!

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

"Stop and set you free!" he cried. "Why should I bother with you! I'm off to the city to see the King!"

And for all the brooklet's beseeching, he went on his way—stump, stump, stump!

A little farther along, what should he see but a fire whose flames were sinking down so that little of it was left, except a mass of red embers.

"Sticks! Give me sticks!" faintly sputtered the fire. "Oh, Little Half-Chick, feed me sticks or I shall go out!"

"Feed you sticks!" cried Little Half-Chick. "Why should I bother with you! I'm off to the city to see the King!"

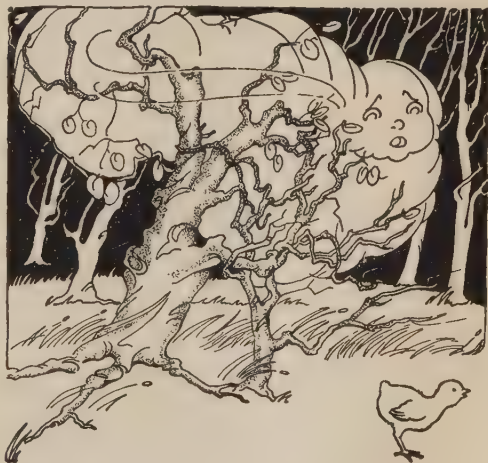
And he tossed his little half-head and flipped his little half-tail and went on his way—stump, stump, stump!

Pretty soon he passed through a wood, and there he found the wind caught tight in a clump of bushes.

"Oh, Little Half-Chick, stop," faintly whispered the wind. "Pull these bushes apart. Let me out! Set me free!"

"Why should I bother with you! I'm off to the city to see the King!"

And Little Half-Chick tossed his little half-head and flipped his little half-tail and went on his way—stump, stump, stump!



M Y B O O K H O U S E



By and by the road grew crowded with people going to town, some riding donkeys and some in wagons; and, in the midst of the crowd, Half-Chick slipped into the city and found the palace of the King. He stumped past a soldier on guard and into the palace yard. But, for all he thought he knew so much, he really knew very little. He didn't know the front door from the back door of the palace. So instead of going in the very grand front gate, he went in by a little back entrance that led to the King's kitchen yard. And just as he crossed the yard, the King's cook looked out of the window.

"Here's just what I need," he cried, "a chicken for the King's soup!" And he reached out the window, seized Little Half-Chick, ran with him to the fire, took the cover

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

off a great pot, threw in a handful of onions, garlic, tomatoes, and peppers, and popped in Little Half-Chick! Then he clapped down the cover, bang!

It was dark inside the kettle: the water rolled over Half-Chick and twirled him round and round.

"Oh, Water!" cried Little Half-Chick, "do not twirl me around! Help me! Help me! Help me!"

But the water began to bubble: "When I was in the brook and could not run for the weeds, you would not stop to help me. You would not set me free. What right have you to ask me to stop and help you now?" And he went on about his business of rolling around in the pot.

Soon the water began to grow hot.

"Oh, Fire! Fire! Do not cook me!" cried Little Half-Chick. But the fire leaped up bright and crackled:

"When I was in need of sticks, you would not stop to help me. What right have you to ask me to stop and help you now?" And he went on about his business of making the water hotter.

Pretty soon the cook took the cover off the pot to see how his soup was doing. As he stood there sniffing its fragrance, who came along but the wind.



M Y B O O K H O U S E

"Oh, Wind, Wind, help me!" cried Little Half-Chick, "get me out of this pot! I pray you, get me out of this pot!"

"Ah, Little Half-Chick," the wind whistled, "when I was caught in the bushes, you would not stop to help me. What right have you to ask me to stop and help you now?"

But, just as the cook was about to clap down the cover again, the wind took pity on Little Half-Chick. He whisked him out of the pot, and he whisked him out of the window.

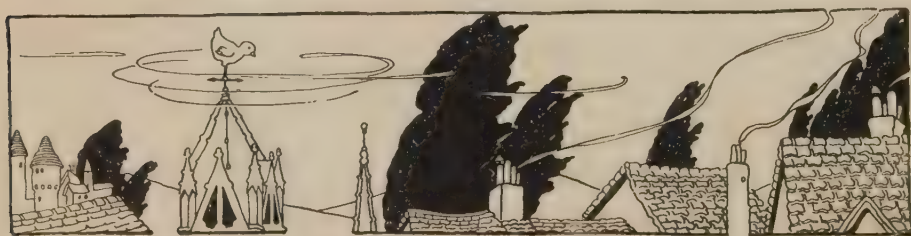
Up, up, up, he flew, high over all the roofs, high over the towers and steeples, up, up, up, over all the town.

"Only a little half-chick would act as you have acted," that was what the wind roared. "Here's the place for a little half-chick!"

And the wind dropped Half-Chick down bang on the very top of a steeple.

"There you are and there you stay," said the wind.

So Little Half-Chick at last found himself only a weather-cock. Fastened tight to the top of that steeple, he stands on his one little leg, even to this day, and he never has his own way, for he's twirled this way and that without even a by-your-leave, whichever way the wind blows.



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



A PICTURE BY A LITTLE GIRL AND
A POEM BY A LITTLE GIRL
"THERE'S DOZENS FULL OF DANDELIONS
down in the FIELD:
LITTLE GOLD PLATES,
LITTLE GOLD DISHES IN THE GRASS.
I CANNOT COUNT THEM,
BUT THE FAIRIES KNOW EVERY ONE."

This poem was written by a little girl named Hilda Conkling when she was five years old, and she has written many more beautiful poems. Pamela Bianco was also a little girl when she drew this pretty picture. The poem is reprinted from *Poems by a Little Girl* by Hilda Conkling. Copyright, 1920, by Frederick A. Stokes Company. The picture is from *Flora* by Pamela Bianco. Courtesy J. B. Lippincott Company, Publishers, Philadelphia.



THE SWING

HOW do you like to go up in a swing,
Up in the air so blue?
Oh, I do think it the pleasantest thing
Ever a child can do!

Up in the air and over the wall,
Till I can see so wide,
Rivers and trees and cattle and all
Over the countryside—

Till I look down on the garden green,
Down on the roof so brown—
Up in the air I go flying again,
Up in the air and down!

—Robert Louis Stevenson



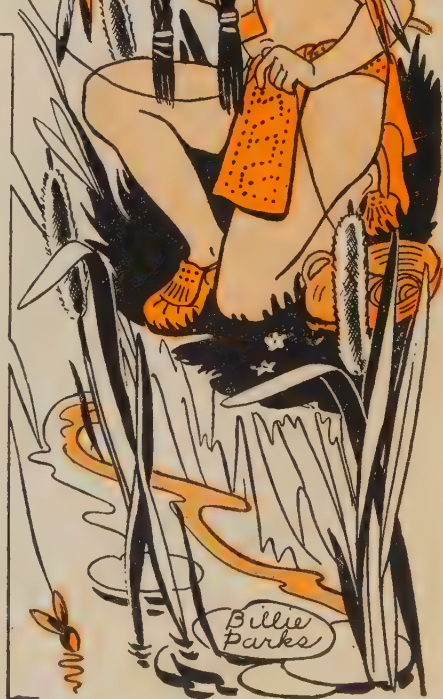
INDIAN CHILDREN★

WHERE we walk to school each day,
Indian children used to play—
All about our native land,
Where the shops and houses stand.

And the trees were very tall,
And there were no streets at all,
Not a church and not a steeple—
Only woods and Indian people.

Only wigwams on the ground,
And at night bears prowling round—
What a different place to-day
Where we live and work and play!

—Annette Wynne



★From *For Days and Days*, published by Frederick A. Stokes Company.

SONG OF THE LEPRECHAUN OR
FAIRY SHOEMAKER

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM

IP-TAP, rip-rap,
Tick-a-tack-too!
Scarlet leather, sewn together,
This will make a shoe.
Left, right, pull it tight;
Summer days are warm;
Underground in Winter,
Laughing at the storm!

Big boots a-hunting,
Sandals in the hall,
White for a wedding-feast,
Pink for a ball.
This way, that way,
So we make a shoe;
Getting rich every stitch,
Tick-a-tack-too!

Rip-rap, tip-tap,
Tick-a-tack-too!
(A grasshopper on my cap!
Away the moth flew!)
Buskins for a Fairy Prince,
Brogues for his son,—
Pay me well, pay me well,
When the job is done!



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

The Shoemaker and the Elves*

A GERMAN FOLK TALE

ONCE there was a shoemaker who worked hard and was very honest; but still he was as poor as a church mouse and could not earn enough to keep himself and his wife. At last there came a time when all he had was gone except one piece of leather—just enough to make one pair of shoes. He cut out the shoes, ready to stitch and make up the next day, and he left them on his work bench, meaning to get up with the sun and start to work. Now the shoemaker was a good man, so his heart was light amidst all his troubles; and he went to bed, peacefully, trusting that he could finish the shoes the next day and sell them. Leaving all his cares to heaven, he laid his head on his pillow and fell asleep.

Bright and early the next morning, he arose and went to his work bench. Lo and behold, there stood the shoes, already made, upon the table! They were beautifully made, too; all was so neat and true, there was not one false stitch. Yet there was no sign of anyone's having been there. The good man and his wife knew not what to say or think. But the first customer, who came in, was so pleased with the beautiful shoes that he bought them. Indeed, he paid so much for them that the shoemaker was able to buy enough leather to make two pairs of shoes.

*In his *Elfin Dance*, the Norwegian composer, Edvard Grieg, has captured all the sprightly movements of elves. The Swedish folk music, *Shoemakers' Dance*, has been recorded for the phonograph.

M Y B O O K H O U S E

The next evening he cut out the two pairs of shoes and went to bed early, as before. But, when he got up in the morning, there were the shoes on the bench, all finished and beautifully made, and, once again, there was no sign that anyone had been there.

That day in came customers who paid the shoemaker handsomely for his goods, so he was able now to buy leather for four pairs of shoes. Once more he cut out the shoes and left them on the bench, and, in the morning, all four pairs were made.

And so it went on for some time, until the good man and his wife were thriving and prosperous. But they could not be satisfied to have so much done for them and not know to whom they should be grateful. One evening about Christmas time, as they were sitting over the fire and chatting together, the shoemaker said to his wife: "I should like to sit up and watch tonight, that we may see who it is that comes and does my work for me."

The wife liked the thought, so they hid themselves behind a curtain and waited to see what would happen. Just as the clock struck twelve, two tiny elves came dancing into the room. They hopped upon the bench, took up the work that was cut out, and began to ply their little fingers, stitching and rapping and tapping at such a rate that the shoemaker was amazed and could not take his eyes off them. These little elves were quite naked, but they had wee little

U P O N E P A I R O F S T A I R S

scissors and hammers and thread. Tap! tap! went the little hammers! Stitch! stitch! went the thread. No one ever worked so fast as those two little elves. They worked on until the job was quite finished and the shoes stood ready for use upon the table. Then they took hold of each other's hands and danced around the shoes on the bench. The shoemaker and his wife had hard work not to laugh aloud at the sight.

But, at daybreak, the little creatures danced away out the windows and left the room as it was before.

"These little wights have made us rich and happy," said the shoemaker to his wife. "How can we thank them and do them a good service in return?"

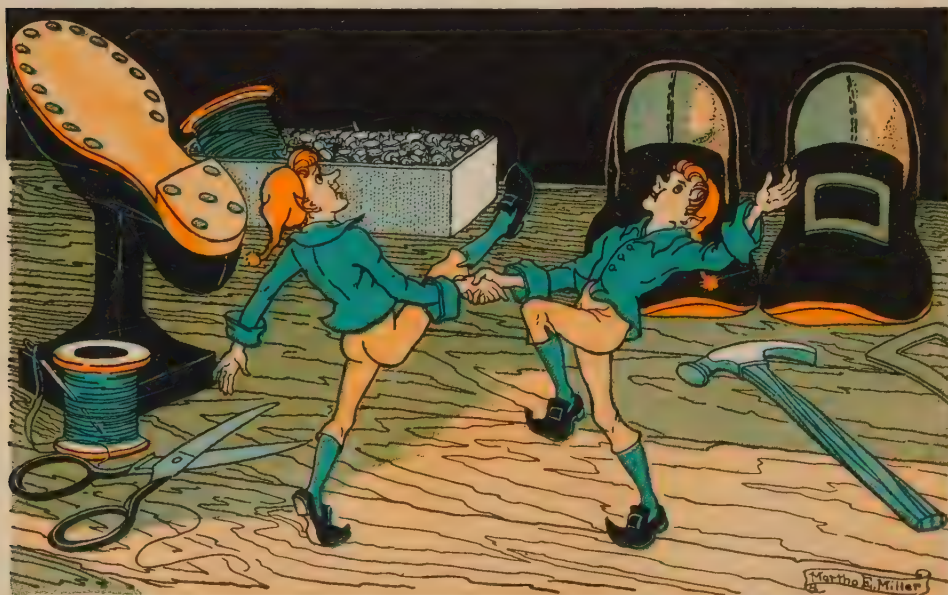
"I am sorry to see them run about as they do with nothing on their backs to keep off the cold," said the wife. "I should like to make them some pretty clothes. I should like to make each a tiny little pair of trousers and a tiny coat and a cap."

"And I will make each of them a little pair of shoes," said her husband.

That very day they set about it. The wife cut out two tiny pairs of yellow trousers; two weeny, weeny blue coats; and two bits of caps, bright orange (for everyone knows the elves love bright colors); and her husband made two little pairs of shoes with long, pointed toes. They made the wee clothes as dainty as could be, with nice little stitches and pretty buttons; and, by Christmas time, they were finished.

M Y B O O K H O U S E

On Christmas eve, the shoemaker cleaned his bench and on it, instead of leather, he laid the two sets of gay little fairy clothes. Then he and his wife hid away as before to see what the elves would do. Promptly at midnight, they came in and hopped upon the bench to do their work; but, when they saw the little clothes they laughed and danced for joy. Each one caught up his clothes and put them on in the twinkling of an eye. Then they began to dance and caper and prance in a circle! But just as the sun rose, they danced out the window, over the green, and out of sight; and the shoemaker saw them no more. From that day on, all went well with the shoemaker and his wife and they never needed help anymore.



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



The Wee, Wee Mannie and the Big, Big Coo

A SCOTCH FOLK TALE

ONCE upon a time when all wee folks were big folks and all big folks were wee folks, there was a wee, wee Mannie and he had a Big, Big Coo. Out he went to milk her of a morning. But the Big, Big Coo kicked up her heels and would not stand still.

"Hout! Look at that now," said the wee, wee Mannie—

"What's a wee, wee Mannie to do
Wi' such a Big, Contrary Coo?"

So off he went to his mother at the house.

M Y B O O K H O U S E

"Mither," said he, "Coo won't stand still, and wee, wee Mannie can't milk Big, Big Coo."

"Hout!" says his mother. "Go tell Big, Big Coo she must stand still."

So off he went to the Big, Big Coo and said:

"Big Coo canna' have her way.

She must stand still! She must, I say!"

But the Big, Big Coo kicked up her heels, swished her tail, and would not stand still. So back went the Mannie to the house and said: "Mither, I've told Big, Big Coo she must, but she will not, and wee, wee Mannie can't milk Big, Big Coo."

"Hout!" says his mother. "Go get a stout, stout stick and shake it at Big, Big Coo."

So off he went and got a stout, stout stick. Then he shook stout, stout stick at Coo and said:

"Big, Big Coo, ye must stand still,

Or my stout stick I'll make ye feel."

But the Big, Big Coo kicked up her heels, swished her tail, tossed her head, and would not stand still. So back went the wee, wee Mannie to the house and said: "Mither, I've told Big, Big Coo she must, I've shaken stout, stout stick at her, but she will not stand still, and wee, wee Mannie can't milk Big, Big Coo."

"Hout!" says his mother. "Go to the draper's and get ye a gown o' silk, for to coax Big, Big Coo."

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

So off he went to the draper's and bought a gown o' silk. Then he spread out the gown o' silk before Big, Big Coo and said:

"Hold still, my Coo, my dearie,
And fill my bucket wi' milk,
And if ye'll not be contrary,
I'll gi'e ye a gown o' silk."

But the Big, Big Coo kicked up her heels, swished her tail, tossed her head, lowered her horns, and would not stand still. So back went the Mannie to the house and said: "Mither, I've told Big, Big Coo she must, I've shaken stout, stout stick at her, I've coaxed her wi' a gown o' silk, but she will not stand still, and wee, wee Mannie can't milk Big, Big Coo."

"Hout!" says his mother. "Then go to Coo and soften her hard, hard heart. Tell her there's a sweet, sweet lady wi' yellow hair by the roadside, and she's weary wi' walkin', and weepin' for a sup o' milk."

So off he went to Coo and said:

"There's a lady by the roadside,
Wi' long and golden hair;
She's wearied out wi' walkin',
And weeps a-sitting there."



M Y B O O K H O U S E



"'Twould make ye weep in buckets,
If ye were just to think,
She's weepin', weepin', weepin',
For a drop o' milk to drink."

But the Big, Big Coo wept no tears in buckets for the lady by the roadside. She kicked up her heels, swished her tail, tossed her head, lowered her horns, bellowed out loudly, "Moo-oo, Moo-oo!" and would not stand still. So back to the house went the Mannie and said: "Mither, I've told Big, Big Coo she must; I've shaken stout, stout stick at her; I've coaxed her wi' a gown o' silk; I've tried to soften her hard, hard heart, but she will not stand still and wee, wee Mannie can't milk Big, Big Coo."

"Well, then," says his mother, "go to that Coo and tell her she *must not* stand still. Bid her kick up her heels, swish her tail, toss her head, lower her horns, and bellow out loudly, 'Moo-oo, Moo-oo!' Such a sair contrary beastie

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

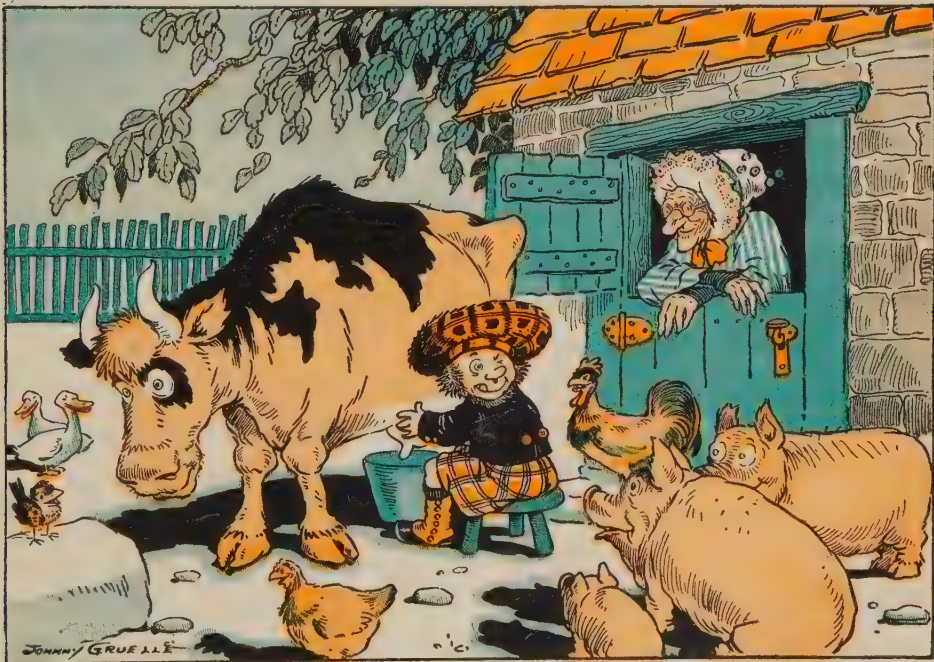
will never do aught but that which she thinks ye don't want her to do."

So off he went to Big, Big Coo and said:

"Coo, ye darena' stand there still!
Kick and rair—'tis what I will!
Never dare to stand, I say,
I bid ye kick and rair all day!"

When she heard that, the Big, Big Coo stood still, heels, tail, head, horns, voice, all still. Then the wee, wee Mannie milked the Big, Big Coo for the sweet, sweet lady with the yellow hair, and the Big, Big Coo never, never, acted like that again—till the next time!

—Adapted



M Y B O O K H O U S E

A Quick-Running Squash

ALICIA ASPINWALL

CHARLES owned a garden. One morning his father called him and pointing to four stakes driven in the ground, said:

"All the land within those four stakes is yours, your very own. You may plant in your garden anything you like, and James will give you what you ask for."

The next day James gave the boy some seeds which he planted himself, James telling him how to do it.

He then got his watering-pot and sprinkled the newly-planted ground with warm water. Running across the lawn, he looked down the road to see if his father had not yet come from the village. His father was nowhere to be seen; but, coming down the road, was a most remarkable-looking man. He was tall and thin and had bright red hair which had evidently not been cut for a very long time. He wore a blue coat, green trousers, red hat; and on his hands, which were large, two very dirty, ragged, white kid gloves.

This wonderful man came up to Charles and asked for a drink of water, which he, being a polite boy, at once brought.

The man thanked him, and then said:

"What have you been doing this morning, little man?"

Charles told him about his new garden, and the man listened with much interest.

Taken by permission from *Short Stories for Short People*. Copyrighted by E. P. Dutton & Company, New York.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

"Little boy," said he, "there is one seed that you have not got."

"And what is that?"

"The seed of the quick-running squash."

Charles's face fell.

"I don't believe James has that, and I don't know where to get one," he faltered.

"Now, as it happens," said the man, "I have one of those very seeds in my pocket. It is not, however, that of the common, everyday quick-running squash. This one came from India and is marvellous for its quick-running qualities. You have been kind to me, little boy, and I will give it to you," and, with a peculiar smile, this strange man produced from his pocket, instead of the ordinary squash seed, an odd, round, red seed which he gave to Charles, who thanked him heartily, and ran to plant it at once.

Having done so, he went back to ask when the quick-running squash would begin to grow. But the man had disappeared. Although Charles looked up and down the dusty road, he could see nothing of him.

As he stood there, he heard behind him a little rustling noise, and turning, saw coming toward him a green vine. He had, of course, seen vines before, but never, never had he seen such a queer one as this. It was running swiftly toward him, and on the very front was a round, yellow ball about as big as an orange! Charles, looking back to see where it came from, found that it started in the

M Y B O O K H O U S E

corner of his garden. And what had he planted in that corner? Why, to be sure, the seed of the quick-running squash, which the strange man had just given him.

"Well, well, well!" he shouted, in great excitement, "what an *awfully* quick-running squash it is. I suppose that little yellow thing in front is the squash itself. But indeed it must not run away from me, I must stop it." And he started swiftly down the street after it.

But, alas, no boy could run as fast as that squash; and Charles saw far ahead the bright yellow ball, now grown to be about the size of an ordinary squash, running and capering merrily over stones big and little, never turning out for anything, but bobbing up and down, up and down, and waving its long green vine like a tail behind it. The boy ran swiftly on.

"It shall *not* get away," he panted. "It belongs to me."

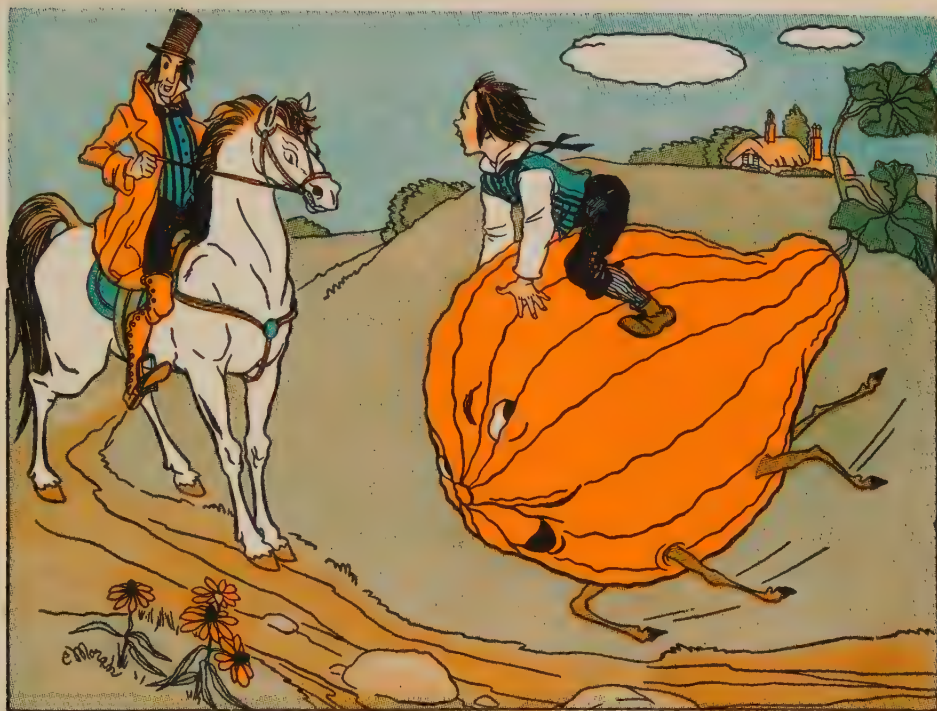
But that the squash did not seem to realize at all. He did not feel that he belonged to anybody, and he *did* feel that he was a quick-running squash and so, on he scampered.

Suddenly he came to a very large rock, and stopped for a moment to take breath, and, in that moment, Charles caught up with him and simply sat down on him.

"Now, squash," said he, slapping him on the side, "your journey is ended."

The words were scarcely spoken when he suddenly felt himself lifted up in the air, and bumpity, bump, over the stone flew the squash, carrying with him his very much astonished little master! The squash had been grow-

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



ing all the time, and was now about three times as big as an ordinary one. Charles, who had a pony of his own, knew how to ride, but never had he ridden anything so extraordinary as this. On they flew—roll, waddle, bump, *bump*, roll, waddle, *bang*—the boy digging his knees hard into the sides of the squash to avoid being thrown. He had a dreadfully hard time. Mount the next quick-running squash you meet, and you will see for yourself how it is.

To Charles's great delight, he now saw his father coming toward him, riding his big white horse, Nero, who

M Y B O O K H O U S E

was very much frightened when he saw the boy on such a strange yellow steed.

But Nero soon calmed down at his master's voice and turning, rode along beside the big squash, although he had to go at full speed to do so.

"Gallopity-gallop" went Nero and "bumpity-bump" went the squash.

Papa lost his hat. (Charles had parted with his long before.)

"What are you doing, my son, and what, *what* is it you are riding?" asked his father.

"A quick-running squash, Papa," gasped Charles, who, although bruised, refused to give up the squash and was still pluckily keeping his seat. "Stop it! Stop it! Oh, do stop it!"

His father knew that this could be no ordinary squash, and saw that it evidently did not intend to stop.

"I will try to *turn* it and make it go back," he said; so, riding Nero nearer and nearer the squash, he forced it up against a stone wall.

But, instead of going back, this extraordinary squash jumped, with scarcely a moment's hesitation, over the high wall and went bobbing along into the rough field that lay beyond. But alas, before them was a broad lake, and as he could not swim, back he was forced to turn. Over the wall and back again over the same road he went and toward the garden whence he came, Charles still on his back and Charles's papa galloping at full speed behind them.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

The squash, however, must have had a good heart, for, when he reached the house again he, of his own accord, turned in at the gate and ran up to the wall of Charles's garden. There he stopped, for he was now so big that he could not climb walls and, indeed, had he been able to get in, he would have filled the little garden to overflowing, for he was really enormous.



Charles's father had actually to get a ladder for the poor little fellow to climb down, and he was so tired that he had to be carried to the house. But the squash was tired, too, dreadfully tired. I suppose it is a very bad thing for a growing squash to take much exercise.

This certainly was a growing squash, and there is also no doubt that he had taken a great deal of exercise that morning.

Be that as it may, when the family were at luncheon, they were alarmed by hearing a violent explosion near the house.

Rushing out to see what could have happened, they found that the marvellous, quick-running squash had *burst!* It lay spread all over the lawn in a thousand pieces.

The family and all the neighbors' families, for miles around, had squash pie for a week.



THREE JOVIAL HUNTSMEN *

THERE were three jovial Welshmen,
 As I have heard them say,
 And they would go a-hunting
 Upon St. David's day.

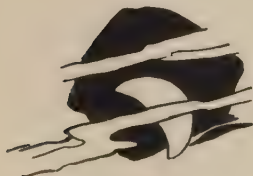
All the day they hunted,
 And nothing could they find
 But a ship a-sailing,
 A-sailing with the wind.

One said it was a ship,
 The other, he said nay;
 The third said it was a house,
 With the chimney blown away.



And all the night they hunted,
 And nothing could they find
 But the moon a-gliding,
 A-gliding with the wind.

One said it was the moon,
 The other, he said nay;
 The third said it was a cheese,
 And half of it cut away.



*Typical music of the hunt—spirited, full of the notes of the hunting horn, the barking of dogs, and the excitement of the chase—are *John Peel*, an old English hunting song; and "The Huntsman's Chorus" from *Der Freischütz*, by the German composer, Carl von Weber (1786-1826).

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



The Little Girl and the Hare

ADAPTED FROM WILHELM AND JACOB GRIMM

ONCE a woman had a pretty green garden with cabbages in it. But a little Hare came each day and ate the cabbages. Then the woman said to her little girl, "Go into the garden and chase the Hare away."

So the little girl said to the Hare, "Shoo! Shoo, little Hare! You are eating up all our cabbages."

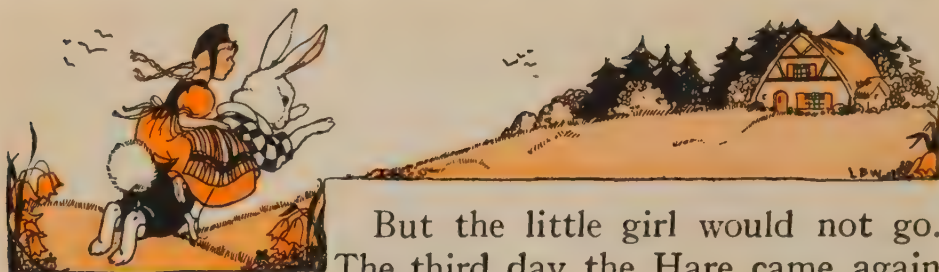
Said the Hare, "Little girl, come, seat thyself on my little Hare's tail and go with me to my little Hare's house."

But the little girl would not go. The next day the Hare came again and ate the cabbages. And the mother said again, "Go into the garden and drive the Hare away."

So the little girl said to the Hare, "Shoo! Shoo, little Hare! You are eating up all our cabbages."

Said the Hare, "Little girl, come, seat thyself on my little Hare's tail and go with me to my little Hare's house."

M Y B O O K H O U S E



But the little girl would not go. The third day the Hare came again and ate the cabbages. Then the mother said as before, "Go into the garden and drive the Hare away."

So the little girl said to the Hare, "Shoo! Shoo, little Hare! You are still eating up our cabbages."

Said the Hare, "Little girl, come, seat thyself on my little Hare's tail and go with me to my little Hare's house."

So the little girl seated herself on the little Hare's tail and the little Hare took her far, far away to his little Hare's house. When he reached there, he said, "Now you shall stay here forever, and be my cook and cook green cabbages and beans for me in the pot by the fire. I will ask some friends to come in and make merry with me."

The guests all came together. They were hares, and a crow, and a fox, and they stood out under the rainbow, waiting to be let in to the little Hare's house.

But the little girl was sad, for she wanted to see her mother. The little Hare came to her and said, "Open the door! Open the door! My guests are merry!"

The little girl said nothing, but she began to cry. The little Hare went away; then the little Hare came back again. He pointed to the pot and said, "Take off the lid! Take off the lid! My guests are hungry!"

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



The little girl said nothing but went on crying. The little Hare went away; then the little Hare came back again. And he said, "Take off the lid! Take off the lid! My guests are waiting!"

The little girl said nothing, but when the Hare went away again, she made a doll out of straw and dressed it up in her own clothes. Then she gave it a spoon to stir with, set it before the pot, and ran back home to her mother! The little Hare came once more and said, "Take off the lid! Take off the lid!"

But when the little girl did not take off the lid, the little Hare went up to see what was the matter. He poked the doll by the pot. Over it fell, its cap rolled off, and the little Hare saw that it was nothing at all but straw! So he had to open the door, let his friends in, and feed them all by himself.



THE HONEST WOODMAN

ADAPTED FROM LA FONTAINE*

A WOODCUTTER worked on the edge of a lake,
A poor man was he with his living to make
As he made the chips fly, he would merrily sing;
"I work for my little ones! Ring, my axe, ring!"

But alas, as he sang and a tree fell crash,
His axe-head flew off! 'Twas in the lake, splash!
The man sat him down on the shore and he sighed.
"How now shall I earn my bread?" he cried.

But out of the water there rose on his sight,
Crowned with lilies, a lady in white.
"Here's your axe-head!" What music was in her voice!
The man sprang up! "Rejoice! Rejoice!"

He reached out his hand but lo and behold!
What the lady held was an axe made of gold.
"My axe was steel; that's not mine!" he said.
She sank and the waters closed over her head.

*Jean La Fontaine, who, like Aesop, is always associated with fables, lived at the court of Louis XIV, in France. He put French folk lore and the popular tales of the Middle Ages into verse. His fables appeared from 1668 to 1694.

Still sadder he sat when she rose again.
"It may be that this is your axe then!"
"No, No! That's silver! It's not mine!" said he.
She sank again all ripplingly.

Like a fountain she rose. "Be glad," said she.
"Here's your good steel axe! You shall have all three!
Since you would not take what was not your own,
Thrice richer are you for your loved ones at home!"

She sank, but the woodcutter made the woods ring;
He hewed the great trees and he started to sing:
"My little ones, you shall be richly fed!
An honest heart has won your bread!"



M Y B O O K H O U S E

The Story of Li'l' Hannibal*

TRANSCRIBED BY CAROLYN SHERWIN BAILEY

Once on a time, 'way down South, there lived a little boy named Hannibal, *Li'l'* Hannibal. He lived, along with his gran'mammy and his gran'daddy in a li'l' one-story log cabin that was set right down in a cotton field. Well, from morning until night Li'l' Hannibal's gran'mammy kept him toting things. As soon as he woke up in the morning it was:

"Oh, Li'l' Hannibal, fetch a pine knot and light the kitchen fire."

"Oh, Li'l' Hannibal, fetch the teakettle to the well and get some water for the tea."

"Oh, Li'l' Hannibal, mix a li'l' hoecake for your gran'daddy's brea'fus'."

"Oh, Li'l' Hannibal, take the bunch of turkeys' feathers and dust the hearth."

And from morning until night Li'l' Hannibal's gran'daddy kept him toting things, too.

"Oh, Li'l' Hannibal," his gran'daddy would say, "fetch the corn and feed the turkeys."

"Oh, Li'l' Hannibal, take your li'l' ax and chop some light wood for your gran'mammy's fire."

"Oh, Li'l' Hannibal, run 'round to the store and buy a bag of flour."

"Oh, Li'l' Hannibal, fetch your basket and pick a li'l' cotton off the edge of the field."

*Used by the courteous permission of *Good Housekeeping*.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



So they kept poor little Hannibal toting 'most all day long, and he had only four or five hours to play.

Well, one morning Li'l' Hannibal woke up and he made up his mind to something. Before they could ask him to light the kitchen fire, or fill the teakettle, or mix the hoecake, or dust the hearth, or feed the turkeys, or chop any wood, or go to the store, or pick any cotton, he had made up his mind that he was not going to tote for his gran'mammy and his gran'daddy any longer. He was going to run away!

These illustrations were drawn by E. W. Kemble, who is famous as an illustrator of negro characters.

M Y B O O K H O U S E

So Li'l' Hannibal got out of bed very quietly. He put on his li'l' trousers and his li'l' shirt and his li'l' suspenders and his li'l' shoes—he never wore stockings. He pulled his li'l' straw hat down tight over his ears and then—Li'l' Hannibal ran away!

He went down the road past all the cabins. He went under the fence and across the cotton fields. He went through the pine grove past the schoolhouse, stooping down low so the schoolmistress wouldn't see him, and then he went 'way, 'way off in the country.

When he was a long way from town Li'l' Hannibal met a Possum, loping along by the edge of the road, and the Possum stopped and looked at Li'l' Hannibal.

"How do? Where you goin', Li'l' Hannibal?" asked the Possum.

Li'l' Hannibal sat down by the side of the road and he took off his straw hat to fan himself, for he felt quite warm, and he said:

"I done run away, Br'er Possum. My gran'mammy and my gran'daddy kep' me totin', totin' for them all the time. I doesn't like to work, Br'er Possum."

"Po' Li'l' Hannibal!" said the Possum, sitting up and scratching himself. "Any special place you boun' for?"

"I don't reckon so," said Li'l' Hannibal, for he was getting tired and he had come away without any breakfast.

"You come along of me, Li'l' Hannibal," said the Possum; "I reckon I kin take you somewhere."

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

So the Possum and Li'l' Hannibal went along together, the Possum loping along by the side of the road, and Li'l' Hannibal going very slowly in the middle of the road, for his shoes were full of sand and it hurt his toes. They went on and on until they came, all at once, to a sort of open space in the woods and then they stopped. There was a big company there—Br'er Rabbit, and Br'er Partridge, and Br'er Jay Bird, and Br'er Robin, and Ol' Miss Guinea Hen.

"Here's Po' Li'l' Hannibal come to see you," said the Possum. "Li'l' Hannibal done run away from his gran'mammy and his gran'daddy."

Li'l' Hannibal hung his head like as if he was ashamed, but nobody noticed him. They were all as busy as ever they could be, so he just sat down on a pine stump and watched them.

Each one had his own special work and he was keeping at it right smart. Br'er Robin was gathering all the holly berries from the south side of the holly tree and singing as he worked:

"Cheer up, cheer-u-u!"

Br'er Partridge was building a new house.

Br'er Jay Bird was taking corn Down Below. You know that is what Br'er Jay Bird does all the time: takes one kernel of corn in his bill to the people Down Below and then comes back for another. It is a very long trip to take with one kernel of corn, but Br'er Jay Bird doesn't seem to mind.

M Y B O O K H O U S E



Ol' Miss Guinea Hen was about the busiest of the whole company, for she was laying eggs. As soon as ever she had laid one she would get up on a low branch and screech, "Catch it! Catch it! Catch it!" like to deafen everybody.

But Li'l' Hannibal was most interested to see what Br'er Rabbit was doing. Br'er

Rabbit had on a li'l' apron, and he kept bringing things in his market basket. Then he cooked the things over a fire back in the bushes, and when it got to be late in the afternoon he spread a tablecloth on a big stump and then he pounded on his stew pan with his soup ladle.

"Supper's ready," said Br'er Rabbit.

Then Br'er Robin and Br'er Partridge and Br'er Jay Bird and Br'er Possum and Ol' Miss Guinea Hen all scrambled to their places at the table and Li'l' Hannibal tried to find a place to sit at, but there wasn't any for him.

"Po' Li'l' Hannibal!" said Br'er Rabbit as he poured out the soup. "Doesn't like work. Cyan't have no supper!"

"Catch him! Catch him!" said Ol' Miss Guinea Hen, but no one did it. They were all too busy eating.

They had a grand supper. There was breakfast strip, and roast turkey, and fried chicken, and mutton,

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



and rice and hominy, and sweet potatoes, and peas, and beans, and baked apples, and cabbage, and hoe-cake and hot biscuit, and corn muffins, and butter cakes, and waffles, and maple syrup.

When they were through eating it was quite dark, and they all went home, even Br'er Possum, and they left Li'l' Hannibal sitting there all by himself.

Well, after a while it began to get darker. Br'er Mocking Bird came out, and he looked at Li'l' Hannibal and then he began to scream, just like Ol' Miss Guinea

M Y B O O K H O U S E

Hen: "Catch him! Catch him! Catch him! Catch him!"

Br'er Screech Owl looked down from a tree and he said very hoarsely:

"Who! Who! Who-oo!"

Then all the frogs began to say, loud and shrill, "Li'l' Hannibal! Li'l' Hannibal!"

So Li'l' Hannibal got up from his pine stump and he said, "I reckon I better go home to my gran'mammy."

Well, Li'l' Hannibal started for home, slowly, because his feet hurt and he was hungry. When he came to the pine grove by the schoolhouse the shadows came out from behind the trees and followed him, and that was much worse than seeing the schoolmistress. But Li'l' Hannibal got away from them all right. He crawled under the fence and ran across the cotton field and there in the door of the cabin was his gran'daddy with a lantern. His gran'daddy had been out looking for Li'l' Hannibal.

"Why, Li'l' Hannibal, where you been all day?" asked his gran'daddy.

"Why, Li'l' Hannibal," said his gran'mammy, "here's your corn mush. I kep' it warm on the hearth, but afore you eat your supper, Li'l' Hannibal, jus' take your li'l' basket and run roun' to the chicken house for a couple of eggs."

So Li'l' Hannibal took his li'l' basket and he started off for those eggs, singing all the way. You see, he reckoned he was mighty glad to be at home and toting again.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

A Story about the Little Rabbits*

JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS

"Fine um whar you will en w'en you may," remarked Uncle Remus with emphasis, "good chilluns allers gits tuck keer on. Dar wuz Brer Rabbit's chil-luns; dey minded der daddy en mammy fum day's een' ter day's een'. W'en ole man Rabbit say 'scoot,' dey scooted, en w'en ole Miss Rabbit say 'scat,' dey scatted. Dey did dat. En dey kep der cloze clean, en dey ain't had no smut on der nose nudder."

Involuntarily the hand of the little boy went up to his face, and he scrubbed the end of his nose with his coat sleeve.

"Dey wuz good chilluns," continued the old man heartily, "en ef dey hadn't er bin, der wuz one time w'en dey wouldn't er bin no little rabbits—na'er one. Dat's w'at."

"What time was that, Uncle Remus?" the little boy asked.

"De time w'en Brer Fox drapt in at Brer Rabbit's house, en didn't foun' nobody dar ceppin' de little Rabbits. Ole Brer Rabbit he wuz off some'rs raidin' on a collard patch, en ole Miss Rabbit she wuz tendin' on a quiltin' in de naberhood, en wiles de little Rabbits wuz playin' hidin'-switch, in drapt Brer Fox. De little Rabbits wuz so fat dat dey fa'rly made his mouf water, but he 'member 'bout Brer Wolf, en he

*From *Uncle Remus, his Songs and his Sayings*. Used by permission of D. Appleton & Company.

M Y B O O K H O U S E



skeered fer ter gobble um up ceppin' he got some 'skuse. De little Rabbits, dey mighty skittish, en dey sorter huddle deyse'f up tergedder en watch Brer Fox' motions. Brer Fox, he set dar en study w'at sorter 'skuse he gwinter make up. Bimeby he see a great big stalk er sugar-cane stan'in' up in de cornder, en he cl'ar up his throat en talk biggity: 'Yer! you young Rabs dar, sail 'roun' yer en broke me a piece er dat sweetin' tree,' sezee, en den he koff.

"De little Rabbits, dey got out de sugar-cane, dey did, en dey rastle wid it, en sweat over it, but twan't no use. Dey couldn't broke it. Brer Fox, he make like he ain't watchin', but he keep on holler'n':

" 'Hurry up dar, Rabs! I'm a waitin' on you.'

"En de little Rabbits, dey hustle 'roun' en rastle wid it, but dey couldn't broke it. Bimeby dey hear little bird singin' on top er de house, en de song w'at de little bird sing wuz dish yer,

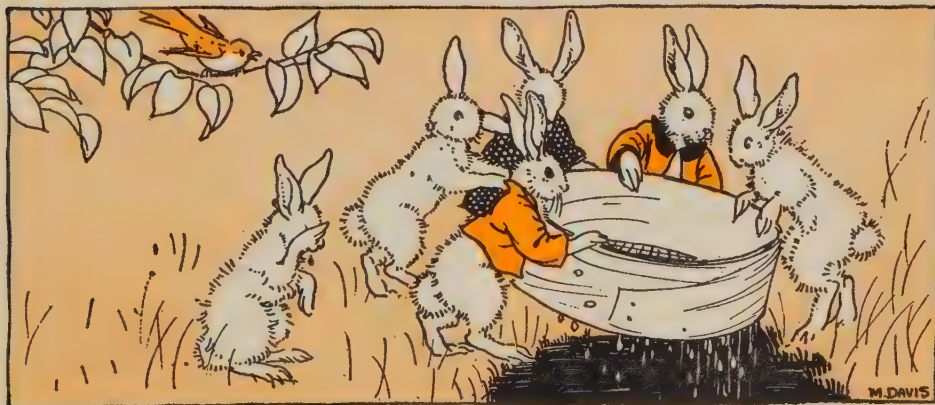
UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

“ ‘Take you toofies en gnyaw it,
Take you toofies en saw it,
Saw it en yoke it,
En den you kin broke it.’

“Den de little Rabbits dey git mighty glad, en dey gnyawed de cane mos’ fo’ ole Brer Fox could git his legs oncrosst, en w’en dey kyard ’im de cane, Brer Fox, he sot dar en study how he gwinter make some more ’skuse fer nabbin’ un um, en bimeby he git up en git down de sifter w’at wuz hangin’ on de wall, en holler out:

“ ‘Come yer, Rabs! Take dish yer sifter, en run downt’ de spring en fetch me some fresh water.’

“De little Rabbits, dey run down t’ de spring en try ter dip up de water wid de sifter, but co’s hit all run out, en hit keep on runnin’ out, twell bimeby de little Rabbits sot down en ’gun ter cry. Den de little bird sittin’ up in de trees he begin fer ter sing, en dish yer’s de song w’at he sing:



M Y B O O K H O U S E

“ ‘Sifter hole water same ez a tray,
Ef you fill it wid moss en dob it wid clay;
De Fox git madder de longer you stay—
Fill it wid moss en dob it wid clay.’

“Up dey jump, de little Rabbits did, en dey fix de sifter so 'twon't leak, en dey kyar de water ter ole Brer Fox. Den Brer Fox he git mighty mad, en p'int out a great big stick er wood, en tell de little Rabbits fer ter put dat on de fier. De little chaps dey got 'roun' de wood, dey did, en dey lif' at it so hard dey could see der own sins, but de wood ain't budge. Den dey hear de little bird singin', en dish yer's de song w'at he sing:

“ ‘Spit in yo' han's en tug it en toll it,
En git behine it, en push it, en pole it;
Spit in yo' han's en r'ar back en roll it.’

“En des 'bout de time dey got de wood on de fier, der daddy, he come skippin' in, en de little bird, he flew'd away. Brer Fox, he seed his game wuz up, en 'twa'nt long 'fo' he make his 'skuse en start fer ter go.

“ ‘You better stay en take a snack wid me, Brer Fox,’ sez Brer Rabbit, sezee. ‘Sense Brer Wolf done quit comin' en settin' up wid me, I gettin' so I feels right lonesome dese long nights,’ sezee.

“But Brer Fox, he button up his coat collar tight en des put out fer home. En dat w'at you better do, honey, kase I see Miss Sally's shadder sailin' backerds en for'ds 'fo' de winder, en de fus' news you know she'll be spectin' un you.”

In his *Fireside Tales*, Edward MacDowell has written music for “Brer Rabbit” and, in his *Woodland Sketches*, there is a piece called “Uncle Remus,” named for the stories of Joel Chandler Harris which MacDowell loved.

THE DARING PRINCE

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

A DARING Prince, of the realm Rangg Dhune,
Once went up in a big balloon
That caught and stuck on the horns of the moon,
And he hung up there until next day noon—
When all at once he exclaimed, "Hoot-toot!"
And then came down in his parachute.



Copyright used by special permission of The Bobbs-Merrill Company.



ROSY POSY

LAURA E. RICHARDS*

THERE was a little Rosy,
And she had a little nosy,
And she made a little posy,
All pink and white and green.
And she said, "Little nosy,
Will you smell my little posy?
For of all the flowers that grows,
Such sweet ones ne'er were seen."

So she took the little posy,
And she put it to her nosy,
On her little face so rosy,
The flowers for to smell;
And which of them was Rosy,
And which of them was nosy,
And which of them was posy,
You really could not tell.

*In Grandma's day, the 1880's, one of the favorite writers for children was Laura E. Richards. With her own baby lying on its stomach on her lap, placid and content, she used the baby's back for a desk, writing her verses while she played nursemaid, tuning her rhythms to the ceaseless, soothing trot-trot of her feet. Brought up in all the old New England traditions, Mrs. Richards was the daughter of Julia Ward Howe, author of the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, and of Samuel Gridley Howe, a New England educator. By permission of Little, Brown & Co.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



Mrs. Tabby Gray

MAUD LINDSAY

MRS. TABBY GRAY, with her three little kittens, lived out in the barn where the hay was stored. One of the kittens was white, one was black, and one was gray just like her mother, who was called Tabby Gray from the color of her coat.

These three little kittens opened their eyes when they grew old enough, and thought there was nothing so nice in all this wonderful world as their own dear mother, although she told them of a great many nice things, like milk and bread, which they should have when they could go up to the big house where she had her breakfast, dinner, and supper.

Every time Mother Tabby came from the big house, she had something pleasant to tell. "Bones for dinner today, my dears," she would say, or "I had a fine romp with a ball and the baby," until the kittens longed for the time when they could go, too.

From *Mother Stories*. Used by the courteous permission of Milton Bradley Company.

M Y B O O K H O U S E



One day, however, Mother Cat walked in with joyful news. "I have found an elegant new home for you," she said, "in a very large trunk where some old clothes are kept; and I think I had better move at once."

Then she picked up the small black kitten, without any more words and walked right out of the barn with him.

The black kitten was astonished, but he blinked his eyes at the bright sunshine and tried to see everything.

Out in the barnyard there was a great noise, for the white hen had laid an egg, and wanted everybody to know it; but Mother Cat hurried on, without stopping to inquire about it, and soon dropped the kitten into the large trunk. The clothes made such a soft, comfortable bed, and the kitten was so tired after his exciting trip, that he fell asleep, and Mrs. Tabby Gray trotted off to get another baby.

While she was away, the lady who owned the trunk came out into the hall; and when she saw that the trunk was open, she shut it, locked it, and put the key in her pocket, for she did not dream that there was anything so precious as a little kitten inside.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

As soon as the lady had gone upstairs, Mrs. Tabby Gray came back, with the little white kitten; and when she found the trunk closed, she was terribly frightened. She put the white kitten down and sprang on top of the trunk and scratched with all her might, but scratching did no good. Then she jumped down and reached up to the keyhole, but that was too small for even a mouse to pass through, and the poor mother mewed pitifully.

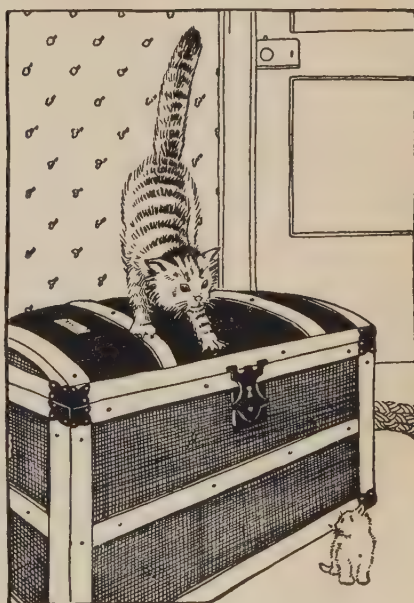
What was she to do?

She picked up the white kitten, and ran to the barn with it. Then she made haste to the house again, and went upstairs to the lady's room. The lady was playing with her baby, and, when Mother Cat saw this, she rubbed against her skirts and cried: "Mee-ow, mee-ow! You have your baby, and I want mine! Mee-ow, mee-ow!"

By and by the lady said: "Poor Kitty! she must be hungry," and she went down to the kitchen and poured sweet milk in a saucer, but the cat did not want milk. She wanted her baby kitten out of the big black trunk!

The kind lady decided that she must be thirsty.

"Poor Kitty, I will give you water," but when she set the



M Y B O O K H O U S E



bowl of water down, Mrs. Tabby Gray mewed more sorrowfully than before. She wanted no water—she only wanted her dear baby kitten; and she ran to and fro crying, until, at last, the lady followed her, and she led the way to the trunk.

“What can be the matter with this cat?” said the lady; and she took the trunk key out of her pocket, put it in the lock, unlocked the trunk, raised the top—and in jump-

ed Mother Cat with such a bound that the little black kitten waked with a start.

“Purr, purr, my darling child,” said Mrs. Tabby Gray, in great excitement, “I have had a dreadful fright!” And, before the black kitten could ask one question, she picked him up and started for the barn.

The sun was bright in the barnyard, and the hens were still chattering there; but the black kitten was glad to get back to the barn.

His mother was glad too; for, as she nestled down in the hay with her three little kittens, she told them that a barn was the best place after all to raise children. And she never afterwards changed her mind.



THE KITTEN AND FALLING LEAVES

SEE the Kitten on the wall,
Sporting with leaves that fall,
Withered leaves — one — two — and three —
From the lofty elder-tree!

With a tiger-leap half-way
Now she meets the coming prey,
Lets it go as fast, and then
Has it in her power again.

—William Wordsworth



M Y B O O K H O U S E

Of a Tailor and a Bear

FROM THE MUSIC BY EDWARD MACDOWELL*

ONCE a tailor sat on his bench cross-legged as tailors sit and he stitched away on some cloth to make a suit of clothes. Now, this tailor loved his violin. He never was any happier than when he had his fiddle tucked comfortably under his chin. He would draw the bow across the strings, making sounds so deliciously sweet that they filled his soul with delight. And always when he worked, he kept his violin beside him.

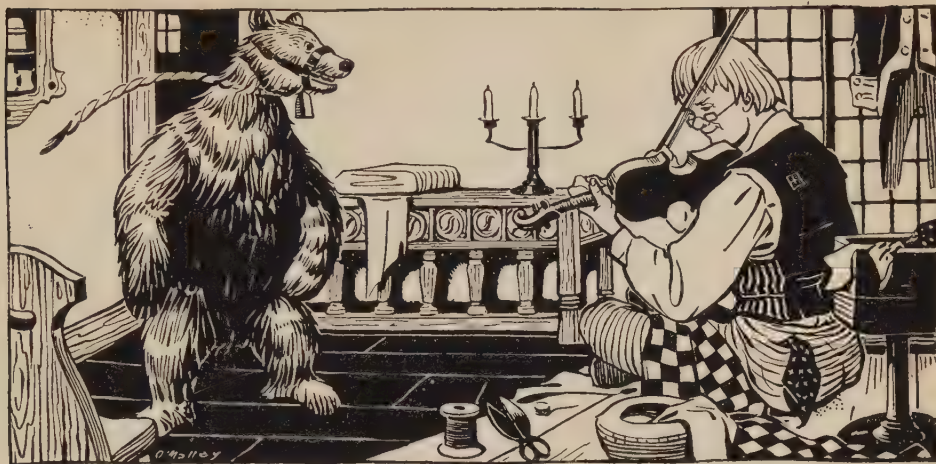
Well one day as he sat stitching, he suddenly heard in the street a terrible commotion! What cries! What screams! What shouts! What a scurry of hurrying feet!

Looking up all at once, what did the tailor see, standing, big as life, in his doorway? There was a great, big bear who had broken away from his keeper and got loose in the street. The tailor was terribly frightened. A great, big bear coming toward him, lumbering on all four feet and growling as he came. What was the tailor to do? In a moment more the great creature would certainly be upon him.

Suddenly the man thought of his beloved violin. Bears liked music; he knew it. So he dropped the cloth he was stitching, seized his violin, tuned it, and started in to play. Never had his fiddle given out more beautiful music before.

*In this musical story by Edward MacDowell (American, 1861-1908), we hear the tailor at his work, then the commotion in the street, the appearance of the bear, growling, and his delight as he dances to the violin music.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



And when the bear heard that music, he stopped right where he was. He came no nearer the tailor. He just stood up on his hind legs and started in to dance. Round and round he turned, slowly and very clumsily. His little eyes beamed with delight and he growled out his pleasure as he danced. And the tailor played and he played till all at once the bear's keeper, in a flurry of excitement, burst in at the door, seeking his wandering beast. He saw that all was well and the bear had done no harm. So he got him by his rope again and led the big creature away. The tailor laid down his fiddle and heaved a sigh of relief. Then he started in to whistle for joy and he made his needle fly as he stitched on his cloth again.

"Gr-r-r, gr-r-r, gr-r-r!" he could hear how the bear was growling as he went away up the street.



THE SONG OF SOLOMON

LO, the winter is past;
the rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of the singing of birds is come.

—*The Bible.*

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

Oeyvind and Marit

(*A Story of Norway*)

BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON

O EYVIND was his name. A low, rocky cliff overhung the house where he was born, fir and birch trees looked down upon the roof, and the wild cherry strewed flowers over it. On this roof lived a little goat belonging to Oeyvind; it was kept there that it might not wander away, and Oeyvind carried leaves and grass up to it. One fine day, the goat leaped down and ran off to the cliff; it went straight up and soon stood where it had never been before. Oeyvind did not see the goat when he came out in the afternoon and thought at once of the fox. He grew hot all over, looked round about,



From *The Happy Boy*. By permission of, and by special arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Co.

M Y B O O K H O U S E

and called: "Here, goat! Here, goat! Here, goat!"

"Ba-a-a!" answered the goat from the top of the hill, putting its head on one side and looking down. At the side of the goat, there was kneeling a little girl.

"Is this goat yours?" asked she.

Oeyvind opened wide his mouth and eyes, thrust both hands into his breeches and said, "Who are you?"

"I am Marit, mother's little one, father's fiddle, the elf in the house, granddaughter to Ola Nordistuen of the Heide farms, four years old in the autumn—I am!"

"Is that who you are?" cried he, drawing a long breath, for he had not dared to take one while she was speaking.

"Is this goat yours?" she asked again.

"Ye-es!" replied he.

"I like it so very much. Will you not give it to me?"

"No indeed, I will not!"

She lay flat on the ground staring down at him, and soon she said: "But if I give you a twisted bun for the goat, may I have it then?"

Oeyvind was the son of poor people; he had tasted twisted bun only once in his life, that was when grandfather came to his house and he had never eaten anything so good before or since. He fixed his eyes on the girl.

"Let me see the bun first," said he.

She was not long in showing him a large twisted bun that she held in her hand.

"Here it is!" cried she, and tossed it to him.

"Oh, it broke in pieces!" said the boy, picking

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

up every bit with the greatest care. He could not help tasting of the very smallest morsel, and it was so good that he had to try another, till before he knew it, he had eaten up the whole bun.

"Now the goat belongs to me," said the girl.

The boy stopped with the last bit in his mouth. The girl lay there laughing, and the goat stood by her side, with its white breast and shining brown hair, looking sideways down.

"Could you not wait a while?" begged the boy, his heart beginning to beat fast. The girl laughed more than ever and quickly got up on her knees.

"No, the goat is mine," said she and threw her arms about it. Then, loosening one of her garters, she fastened it about its neck. Oeyvind watched her. She rose to her feet and began to tug at the goat; it would not go along with her, and stretched its neck over the edge of the cliff toward Oeyvind. "Ba-a-a-a!" said the goat.

Then the little girl took hold of its hair with one hand, pulled at the garter with the other, and said prettily: "Come now, goat, you shall go into the sitting-room and eat from mother's dish." And then she sang:

*"Come, boy's pretty goatie,
Come, calf, my delight,
Come here, mewing pussie,
In shoes snowy white.
Yellow ducks from your shelter,
Come forth, helter skelter."*

M Y B O O K H O U S E



There the boy stood. He had taken care of the goat ever since winter, when it was born, and he had never dreamed that he could lose it; but now it was gone in a moment and he would never see it again.

His mother came up humming from the beach, with some wooden pails she had been scouring. She saw the boy sitting on the grass, with his legs crossed under him, crying, and she went to him.

"What makes you cry?"

"Oh, my goat—my goat!"

"Why, where is the goat?" asked the mother, looking up at the roof.

"It will never come back anymore," said the boy.

"Dear me! How can that be?"

Oeyvind would not tell what he had done at first.

"Has the fox carried it off?"

"Oh, I wish it were the fox."

"Then, what has become of it?" cried the mother.

"Oh—oh—oh! I happened to—to—to sell it for a twisted bun!"

As soon as he spoke, the boy understood what he had done, to sell his pet goat for a bun; he had not thought about it before.

The mother said, "What do you suppose the goat thinks

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



of you, when you're willing to sell it for a twisted bun?"

The boy thought this over and felt perfectly sure that he could never be happy again. He was so sorry for what he had done, that he promised himself he would never do anything wrong again—neither cut the cord of the spinning wheel, nor let the sheep loose, nor go down to the sea alone. He fell asleep and dreamed about his goat. Then something wet was thrust right against his ear and he started up. "Ba-a-a-a!" he heard, and it was the goat that had returned to him.

"What! Have you come back again?" He sprang up, seized it by the two forelegs, and danced about with it as if it were a brother. He pulled it by the beard and was on the point of going in to his mother with it, when he heard someone behind him, and saw the little girl sitting on the grass. Now he understood why the goat had come back and he let go of it.

"Is it you who have brought the goat?"

She sat tearing up the grass with her hands and said, "I was not allowed to keep it; grandfather is up there waiting." While the boy stood staring at her, a sharp voice from the road above called, "Well!"

Then she remembered what she had been told to do; she rose, walked up to Oeyvind, thrust one of her dirt-

M Y B O O K H O U S E

covered hands into his, and turning her face away said, "I beg your pardon!" But then her courage was all gone; she flung her arms about the goat and burst into tears.

"I believe you had better keep the goat," stammered Oeyvind, looking the other way.

"Make haste now!" called her grandfather from the hill, so Marit turned and walked slowly toward him.

"You have forgotten your garter," Oeyvind shouted after her. She turned and looked at him, then she answered in a choked voice, "You may keep it." He walked up to her, took her hand and said, "I thank you."

"Oh, it's nothing to thank for," she answered, but she still sobbed as she walked away.

Oeyvind sat down on the grass again, the goat roaming about near him, but he was no longer as happy with it as before.

The goat was fastened near the house, but Oeyvind wandered away, with his eyes fixed on the cliff. His mother came and sat down beside him; he asked her to tell him stories about things that were far away, for now the goat no longer satisfied him. So his mother told him how, once, everything could talk. The mountain talked to the brook, the brook to the river, the river to the sea, and the sea to the sky; the sky talked to the clouds, the clouds to the trees, the trees to the grass, the grass to the flies, the flies to the beasts, the beasts to the children, and

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

the children to grown people. So it went on and on, and round in a circle. As she talked Oeyvind looked at the cliff, the trees, the sea, and the sky and it seemed to him he had never truly seen them before. The cat came out just then and stretched itself on the doorstep in the sunshine.

"What does the cat say?" asked Oeyvind. The mother sang:

*"Evening sunshine softly is dying,
On the doorstep lazy puss is lying.
'Well filled am I and sleek,
I'm very lazy and meek,'
Says the pussie."*



Then the cock came strutting up with all his hens. "What does the cock say?" asked Oeyvind, clapping his hands. His mother sang:

*"Mother-hen, her wings now are sinking,
Rooster on one leg stands thinking.
'Seek your shelter, hens, I pray,
Gone is the sun to his rest for today,'
Says the Cock."*



Thus Oeyvind learned what all were saying, even to the ant crawling in the moss and the worm working in the bark of the trees.

The same summer his mother began to teach him to read. Then, one day, she said to him, "Tomorrow school begins again and you are going."

M Y B O O K H O U S E

Oeyvind had heard that school was a place where boys played together and he was greatly pleased. He walked faster than his mother up the hillside, so eager was he. When they came to the school-house, a loud buzzing like that from the mill at home, met them and he asked his mother what it was.

"It is the children reading," answered she.

On entering, he saw many children around a table; others sat on their dinner pails along the wall, some stood in groups around a large printed card covered with numbers. The schoolmaster, an old gray-haired man, sat on a stool by the chimney corner.

They all looked up as Oeyvind and his mother came in and the mill-hum ceased as if the water had been suddenly turned off. The mother bowed to the schoolmaster, who returned her greeting.

"I have come here to bring a little boy who wants to learn to read," said the mother.

"What is his name?" asked the schoolmaster.

"Oeyvind. He knows his letters and he can spell."

"You don't say so," said the schoolmaster. "Come here, little Whitehead."

Oeyvind went over to him; the schoolmaster took him on his lap and raised his cap.

"What a nice little boy!" said he and stroked his hair. Oeyvind looked up into his eyes and laughed.

"Is it at me you are laughing?" asked the schoolmaster with a frown.

U P O N E P A I R O F S T A I R S

"Yes, it is," answered Oeyvind, and roared with laughter. At that the schoolmaster laughed; Oeyvind's mother laughed; the children understood that they also might laugh, and so they all laughed together.

When Oeyvind was to take his seat, all the scholars wished to make room for him. He, on his part, looked about for a long time. Then he spied near the hearthstone, close beside him, sitting on a little red-painted box, Marit with the many names. She had hidden her face behind both hands and sat peeping out at him.

"I will sit here!" cried Oeyvind at once, and, seizing a lunchbox, he seated himself at her side. Now she raised the arm nearest him a little and peered at him from under her elbow; forthwith he, too, covered his face with both hands and looked at her from under his elbow. Thus they sat cutting capers till the reading began again! The children read aloud, each from his book, high little voices piping up and lower voices drumming, while here and there one chimed in to be heard above all the rest. In his whole life, Oeyvind had never had such fun.

"Is it always like this here?" he whispered to Marit.

"Yes, always," said she.

Later, they too had to go forward to the schoolmaster to read; then they were allowed to sit quietly down again.

"I have a goat now myself," said Marit.

"Have you?" cried Oeyvind, and that was the very best thing he learned on his first day at school.



THE SHAKING OF THE PEAR-TREE

DINAH M. MULOCH CRAIK

Of all days I remember,
In summers passed away,
Was "the shaking of a pear-tree,"
In Grandma's orchard gay.

A large, old-fashioned orchard,
With long grass under foot,
And blackberry-brambles crawling
In many a tangled shoot.

From cherry time, till damsons
Dropped from the branches sere,
That wonderful old orchard
Was full of fruit all year!

We pick'd it up in baskets,
Or pluck'd it from the wall;
But the shaking of the pear-tree
Was the grandest treat of all.

So off we started gaily,
Heedless of jolt and jar;
Through town, and lane, and hamlet,
In old Llewellyn's car.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



The patient, kind Llewellyn—
Whose broad face smiled all o'er,
As he lifted out the children
At Grandma's very door.

And there stood Grandma's Betty,
With cheeks like apples red;
And Dash, the spaniel, waddled
Out of his cosy bed.

I hope no child will vex us,
As we vexed Betty then,
With winding up the draw-well,
Or hunting the old hen.

And teasing, teasing, teasing,
Till afternoon wore 'round,
And shaken pears came tumbling
In showers upon the ground.

O, how we jumped and shouted!
O, how we plunged amid
The long grass, where the treasures
Dropped down and deftly hid.

The Funeral March of a Marionette

The Story of the Music by

CHARLES FRANÇOIS GOUNOD*

ONCE there were some marionettes who acted in plays together, and they were all very good friends. Now the man who pulled the wires attached to the marionettes' bodies to make them move their arms and legs in his little puppet theatre, thought they were just wooden dolls; but really they had feelings. Yes, indeed, they had feelings. One day two of these marionettes got into a terrible argument. Each vowed the other was wrong, and he alone was right. Louder and louder they talked! More and more angry they grew. They banged and hit each other till one got his wooden nose broken. Alack, this injury proved so very severe, that he crumpled up and he died.

Well, that was a sad event. The marionettes planned a funeral and all the wooden friends of the unfortunate marionette set out for the cemetery, following the funeral procession. As they trudged along the road, they wept shiny tears of varnish in sorrow for their friend. But they soon passed a wayside inn and one little actor cried, "Brothers, let's stop a moment. We need a cool drink for refreshment!"

So into the inn, clap, clap went the troupe of marionettes. Their wooden joints creaked with weariness as they sat down at the tables, but they sipped

*Charles Gounod (1818-1893) was a great French composer best known for his opera, *Faust*.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

the cool drinks that were served them until they were quite refreshed. Then their wooden tongues started to clatter. Clackety clack, how they talked.

At last one marionette took out his watch and looked at it. "It's late!" he cried in excitement. "We'll have to run to catch up with the funeral procession!"

What a hurry-scurry! What a click-clack of wooden feet! Out of the inn they raced, down the steps, and up the road. Not until they reached the very gate of the cemetery, did they overtake the procession. It was moving along very grandly in a very dignified manner. So each little marionette wiped the dust off his wooden feet and quieted down to walk in a properly solemn fashion. Bowing their heads, they stalked gravely at the rear of the procession, paying their last respects to their departed brother-actor; but, though they now proceeded at a slow and stately pace, their stiff wooden knees still creaked and their wooden feet still faintly sounded clack, click-clack!



THE SEA SHELL★

SEA Shell, Sea Shell,
Sing me a song, O please!
A song of ships and sailor-men
Of parrots and tropical trees;
Of islands lost in the Spanish Main
Which no man may see again,
Of fishes and corals under the waves,
And sea-horses stabled in great green caves—

Sea Shell, Sea Shell,
Sing me a song, O please.

—Amy Lowell



★Used by the courteous permission of the author.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

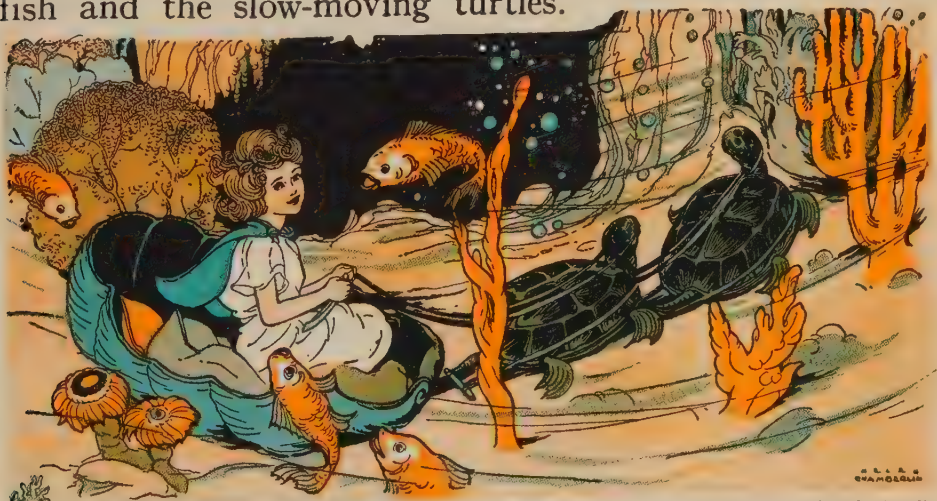
Clytie^{*}

FLORA J. COOKE

CLYTIE was not always a sunflower, turning on her stem to watch the journeying sun.

Long ago she was a water nymph and lived in a cave at the bottom of the sea. The walls of the cave were covered with pearls and lovely pink sea shells. The floor was made of snow-white sand, and the chairs were of amber, with soft, mossy cushions.

On each side of the cave opening was a forest of coral and sea fans. Behind the cave were Clytie's gardens. Here she spent long hours taking care of her sea anemones, her star lilies, or in planting rare kinds of seaweed. Clytie kept her favorite horses in the garden grotto. These were the swift-darting goldfish and the slow-moving turtles.



*The wonder of sea caves is told in music in the overture, *Fingal's Cave*, by Mendelssohn, who visited Fingal's Cave off the coast of Scotland, in 1829. All the beauty of the sea, with its ever shifting waves, is also in *From Dawn Till Noon on the Sea*, *Frolics of Waves*, and *Dialogue of the Wind and the Sea*, by Debussy. This story of "Clytie" is from *Nature Myths and Stories*, copyrighted and published by A. Flanagan Company, Chicago.

M Y B O O K H O U S E



For a long time she was very happy and contented. The sea nymphs loved Clytie, and wove for her dresses of the softest of green sea lace. They told her all their best stories.

One day they took her to the mermaid's rock to hear the mermaid sing. Clytie liked one song best of all.

It told of a glorious light which shone on the top of the water. After Clytie heard this song, she could think of nothing else, but longed day and night to see the wonderful light. But no ocean nymph dared take her to it, and she grew very unhappy. Soon she neglected her garden and all her sea treasures.

In vain the nymphs begged her to forget the enchanting light. They told her no sea nymph had ever seen it, or ever could hope to see it. But Clytie would not listen, and to escape them she spent more and more of her time in her shell carriage, riding far away from her cave. In this way she could dream, undisturbed, of the glorious light which the mermaid called the "sun."

Now it happened that late one summer night, when the sea was warm and the turtles were going very slowly, Clytie fell asleep. Unguided, the turtles went on and on and up and up, through the green waters, until they came out at last close to a wooded island.

As the waves dashed the carriage against the shore, Clytie awoke. Trembling and filled with wonder, she climbed out of the shell and sat down upon a rock.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

It was early dawn, and the waking world was very beautiful. Clytie had never seen the trees and the flowers. She had never heard the birds chirping, or the forest wind rustling the leaves. She had never smelled the fragrance of the meadows, or seen the morning dew upon the grass.

She was dazed by all these wonders, and thought she must be dreaming, but soon she forgot all about them, for the eastern sky blazed suddenly with light. Great purple curtains were lifted, and slowly a great ball of dazzling fire appeared, blinding her eyes with its beauty. She held her breath and stretched out her arms toward it, for she knew at once that this was the glorious light she had dreamed about and longed for. This was the sun. In the midst of the light was a golden chariot, drawn by four fiery steeds, and in the chariot sat a wonderful, smiling King, with seven rays of light playing around his crown. As the steeds mounted higher and higher in their path, the birds began to sing, the plants opened their buds, and even the old sea looked happy.

Clytie sat all day upon the rock, her eyes fixed upon the sun with a great love and longing in her heart. She wept when the chariot disappeared in the West and darkness came over the earth. The next day from sunrise to sunset she gazed upon the sun,

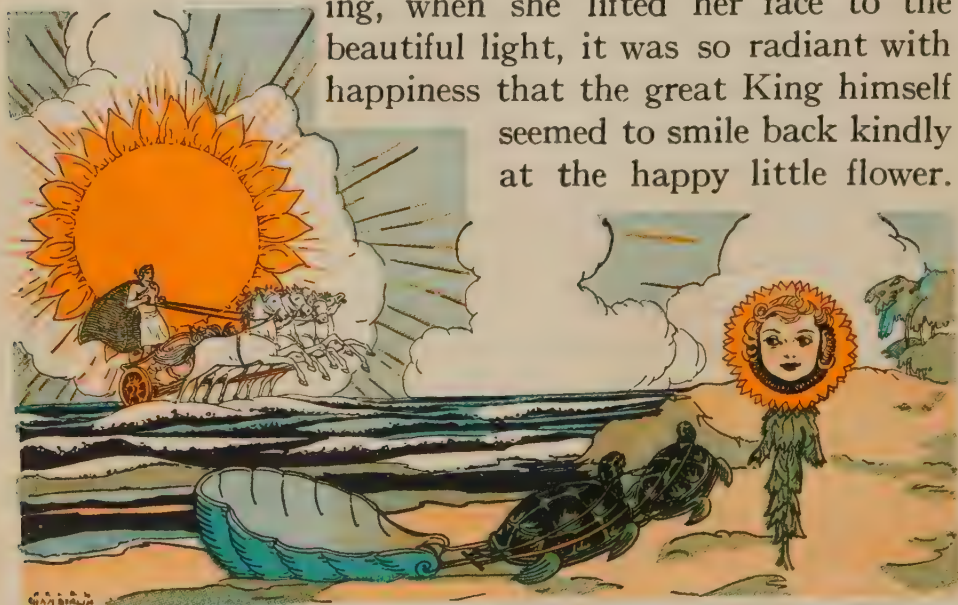


M Y B O O K H O U S E

and, at night, she refused to go home. For nine days and nights she sat with her golden hair unbound, tasting neither food nor drink, only longing more and more for the smile of the glorious King. She called to him and stretched out her arms, yet she had no hope that he would ever notice her or know of her great love.

On the tenth morning, when she leaned over the water, she was amazed, for instead of her own face, a beautiful flower looked up at her from the sea. Her yellow hair had become golden petals, her green dress had turned into leaves and stems, and her little feet had become roots which fastened her to the ground. Clytie had become the small image of the sun. The next morn-

ing, when she lifted her face to the beautiful light, it was so radiant with happiness that the great King himself seemed to smile back kindly at the happy little flower.



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

And so Clytie began her life upon the earth, and she became the mother of a large family of flowers with bright faces like her own. Her children are called sunflowers, and you may find them scattered all over the country, even in the dry and dusty places where other flowers will not grow. And if you care to, you may find out for yourselves whether or not it is true that all the sunflowers in the world turn upon their stalks, from sunrise until sunset, so that they may always keep their faces toward the sun.

THE SEA*

EMILY DICKINSON

AN everywhere of silver
With ropes of sand
To keep it from effacing
The track called land.



*From *The Poems of Emily Dickinson*, Centenary Edition. Edited by Martha Dickinson Bianchi and Alfred Leete Hampson. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown & Company.

The Babe Moses

RETOLD FROM THE BIBLE

ONCE there lived a great Pharaoh who was the king over Egypt. Now he was a mighty king; but he was afraid in his heart because there lived in his kingdom a very large number of people who were not Egyptians. These people were the Children of Israel, who had come many years before from the rocky hills of the north and settled with their cattle and sheep on the green grasslands of Egypt. And Pharaoh was afraid that the Children of Israel would some day rise up against him and fight him and take away his throne. And Pharaoh said: "The Children of Israel are more and mightier than we are. Come on, let us deal wisely with them, lest it come to pass, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies and fight against us."



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



And Pharaoh set taskmasters over the Children of Israel to drive them, with great whips, to heavy work in his brickyards and the building of his cities. And he made their lives bitter with labor in brick and in all manner of service in the field. But, in spite of all their sorrows, the Children of Israel flourished and grew mightily in numbers; for there were born unto them many sturdy babes.

So Pharaoh said: "I fear lest these Children of Israel should have too many boy babies that will grow up to be strong men and stand against us in battle. Come on then; let us throw into the river every boy babe that is born unto them."

Now there lived at this time in Egypt a man and his wife of the Children of Israel, and there was born unto them a boy babe, but he was a goodly child and his mother loved him and cherished him. And she kept him hid three months that Pharaoh's servants might not find him and throw him into the river.



And, when she could no longer hide him, she gathered bulrushes from the river bank and made of them a little ark. And she daubed the ark with mud and pitch and put her babe therein, and laid him in the rushes by the river.

Then she bade his sister stand afar off and watch what would be done to him. And she kissed the baby and left him and went back to her home; for she knew that God was with the child to save him.

And it came to pass that the daughter of Pharaoh, the King, came down to wash herself at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side. And, when the daughter of Pharaoh saw the ark among the rushes, she sent her maid to fetch it. And, when she had laid back the coverings, she saw the child; and behold, the babe wept! And Pharaoh's daughter was filled with pity and she said: "This is a babe of the Children of Israel, even such an one as my father has commanded should be thrown into the river."

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

And she took the little one to her and held him in her arms. And she thought within herself that she would save this child; for she knew that the King, her father, would certainly grant unto her whatsoever she asked of him. So she cried to her maids and said, "I will ask of the King, my father, that I may keep this little one. He shall be as my own son."

Then came the sister of the babe, who had been watching by the riverside. And she said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call thee a nurse of the women of Israel that she may care for the child for thee?"



M Y B O O K H O U S E

And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go!"

And the maid went and called the child's own mother.

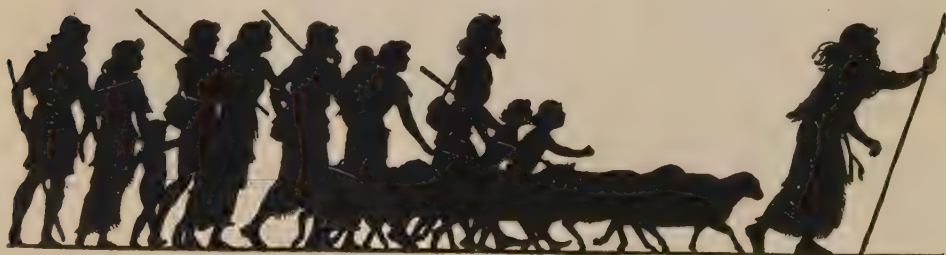
And Pharaoh's daughter said unto the child's mother, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give thee thy wages."

And the mother took her babe close. And she gave thanks in her heart that God had saved him for her.

And she nursed the child and he grew, and he lived with his mother and father until he was no more a babe. And when he was grown old enough to leave his mother's side, his mother brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter in the house of the King, and Pharaoh's daughter kept him as her own son.

And she called his name, Moses. "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water."

When Moses grew to be a man, he gathered the Children of Israel together and led them out of Egypt where their lives were made so bitter. He led them to settle in Canaan, the land from whence they had come; and there they built their homes, free from the sorrows of Egypt.



UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



THE BROOK SONG*

JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY

Little brook! Little brook!
You have such a happy look—
Such a very merry manner, as you swerve
and curve and crook—
And your ripples, one and one,
Reach each other's hands and run
Like laughing little children in the sun!

Little brook, sing to me:
Sing about a bumblebee
That tumbled from a lily-bell and grumbled mumblingly,
Because he wet the film
Of his wings and had to swim,
While the water-bugs raced round and laughed at him.

Little brook—sing a song
Of a leaf that sailed along
Down the golden-braided center of your current swift and strong,
And a dragon fly that lit
On the tilting rim of it,
And rode away and wasn't scared a bit.

**At the Brook* by the French composer Boisd'effre (1838-1906) imitates with violin, cello, and piano the rhythmic flow of the brook; and *The Brooklet* by Franz Schubert (1797-1828) is full of the sound of rushing water. Copyright used by special permission of The Bobbs-Merrill Co.



The Wind and the Sun


THE Wind and the Sun once met,
 And together they made a bet.
 Said the Wind: "Over there, there's a man—
 I can blow his cloak off, I can!
 That's something I'll bet you can't do,
 I'll prove I'm more powerful than you!"
 He blustered and roared as he spoke.
 The man shivered and drew close his cloak.

And the fiercer the fierce Wind blew,
 The closer that cloak the man drew.
 Then the Sun, glowing soft and mild,
 Shone warmly and gently and smiled.
 And the warmer he shone, what a joke!
 The man took off his cloak.
 Said the Sun: "Gentle warmth evermore
 Will do more than bluster and roar!"

—Adapted from Aesop



These illustrations are modeled on those of Walter Crane, one of the greatest English illustrators of the late 19th Century. His beautifully decorative drawings have left a great influence on the art of our time in its love for decoration and design.



THE DOG IN THE MANGER

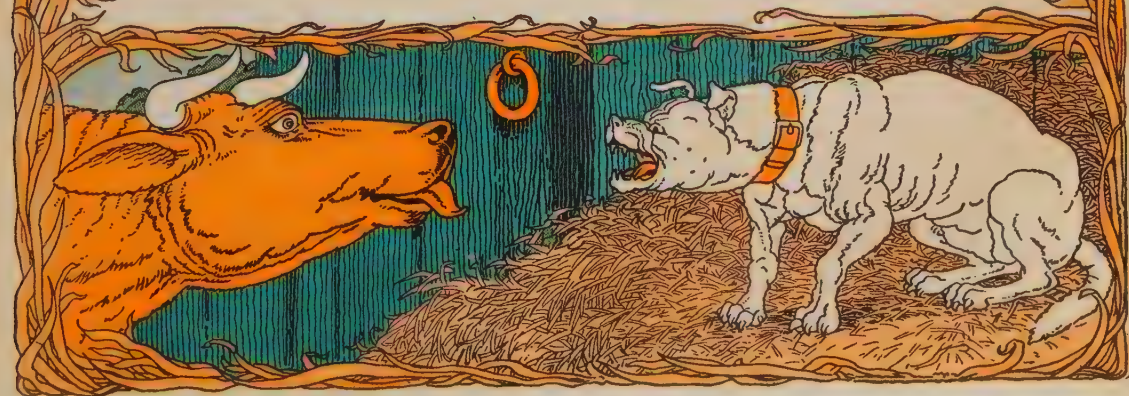
A DOG lay in a manger
Upon a pile of hay;
In came Mrs. Bossy Cow
All on a winter's day.

She went up to the manger,
Upon that hay to dine,
As always was her custom,
Just at dinner time.

Up then rose that snarling dog;
He growled and snarled and growled.
“Don't touch this hay! It's mine!” he snapped;
And snarled and growled and howled.

The gentle cow she looked at him;
Surprise was in her eyes.
None but a growling, snarling dog
Behaves in such a wise!

—Adapted from Aesop



No more beautiful edition of Aesop's *Fables* has ever appeared than that illustrated by Crane—*A Baby's Own Aesop*. Picture books by such masters of illustration as Crane, Caldecott, and Kate Greenaway belong in every child's library.



LITTLE MAID OF FAR JAPAN*

LITTLE maid upon my fan,
Did you come from far Japan?
What a tiny oval face!
Do you like this other place?

Do you miss the cherry trees
Where you know the little breeze,
Where you heard the cuckoo sing
In the spring?



Then you crossed your lattice floor,
Flung aside your paper door,
Joined the other maids at play,
Far away.

Now you live upon my fan,
Little maid of far Japan,
Still, you have a merry face—
Do you like this other place?

—Annette Wynne



*From *For Days and Days*. Reprinted by the courteous permission of Frederick A. Stokes Company

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



The Tongue-Cut Sparrow*

TERESA PEIRCE WILLISTON

In a little old house in a little old village in Japan, lived a little old man and his little old wife.

One morning when the old woman slid open the screens which form the sides of the Japanese houses, she saw on the doorstep a poor little sparrow. She took him up gently and fed him. Then she held him in the bright morning sunshine until the cold dew was dried from his wings. Afterward she let him go, so that he might fly home to his nest; but he stayed to thank her with his songs.

Each morning, when the pink on the mountain tops told that the sun was near, the sparrow perched on the roof of the house and sang out his joy.

The old man and woman thanked the sparrow for this, for they liked to be up early and at work. But near them lived a cross old woman who did not like to be wakened so early. At last she became so angry that she caught the sparrow and cut his tongue. Then the poor little sparrow flew away to his home. But he never could sing again.

*From *Japanese Fairy Tales*. Published by Rand McNally & Company.

M Y B O O K H O U S E

When the kind woman knew what had happened to her pet she was very sad. She said to her husband, "Let us go and find our poor little sparrow." So they started together, and asked of each bird by the wayside: "Do you know where the tongue-cut sparrow lives? Do you know where the tongue-cut sparrow went?"

In this way they followed until they came to a bridge. They did not know which way to turn, and at first could see no one to ask.

At last they saw a bat, hanging head downward, taking his day-time nap. "O, friend Bat, do you know where the tongue-cut sparrow went?" they asked.

"Yes. Over the bridge and up the mountain," said the bat. Then he blinked his sleepy eyes and was fast asleep again.

They went over the bridge and up the mountain, but again they found two roads and did not know which one to take. A little field mouse peeped through the leaves and grass, so they asked him, "Do you know where the tongue-cut sparrow went?"

"Yes. Down the mountain and through the woods," said the field mouse.

Down the mountain and through the woods they went, and at last came to the home of their little friend.

When he saw them coming the poor little sparrow

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

was very happy indeed. He and his wife and children all came and bowed their heads down to the ground to show their respect. Then the sparrow rose and led the old man and the old woman into the house, while his wife and children hastened to bring them boiled rice, fish, and cress.

After they had feasted, the sparrow wished to please them still more, so he danced for them what is called the "sparrow dance."



M Y B O O K H O U S E

When the sun began to sink, the old man and woman started home. The sparrow brought out two baskets. "I would like to give you one of these," he said. "Which will you take?" One basket was large and looked very full, while the other one seemed very small and light. The old people thought they would not take the large basket, for that might have all the sparrow's treasure in it, so they said, "The way is long, so please let us take the smaller one."

They took it and walked home over the mountain and across the bridge, happy and contented.

When they reached their own home they decided to open the basket and see what the sparrow had given them. Within the basket they found many rolls of silk and piles of gold, enough to make them rich, so they were more grateful than ever to the sparrow.

The cross old woman who had cut the sparrow's tongue was peering through the screen when they opened their basket. She saw the rolls of silk and piles of gold, and planned how she might get some for herself.

The next morning she went to the kind woman and said, "I am so sorry that I cut the tongue of your sparrow. Please tell me the way to his home so that I may go to him and tell him I am sorry."

The kind woman told her the way and she set out. She went across the bridge, over the mountain, and

U P O N E P A I R O F S T A I R S

through the woods. At last she came to the home of the little sparrow.

He was not so glad to see this old woman, yet he was very kind to her and did everything to make her feel welcome. They made a feast for her, and when she started home the sparrow brought out two baskets as before. Of course the woman chose the large basket, for she thought that would have even more wealth than the other one.

It was very heavy, and caught on the trees as she was going through the wood. She could hardly pull it up the mountain with her, and she was all out of breath when she reached the top. She did not get to the bridge until it was dark. Then she was so afraid of dropping the basket into the river that she scarcely dared to step.

When at last she reached home she was tired out, but she pulled the screens close shut, so that no one could look in, and opened her treasure.

Treasure indeed! A whole swarm of horrible creatures burst from the basket the moment she opened it. They stung her and bit her, they pushed her and pulled her, and scratched her.

At last she crawled to the edge of the room and slid aside the screen to get away from the pests. The moment the door was opened they swooped down upon her, picked her up, and flew away with her. Since then nothing has been heard of the old woman.



THE MOCK TURTLE'S SONG*

LEWIS CARROLL

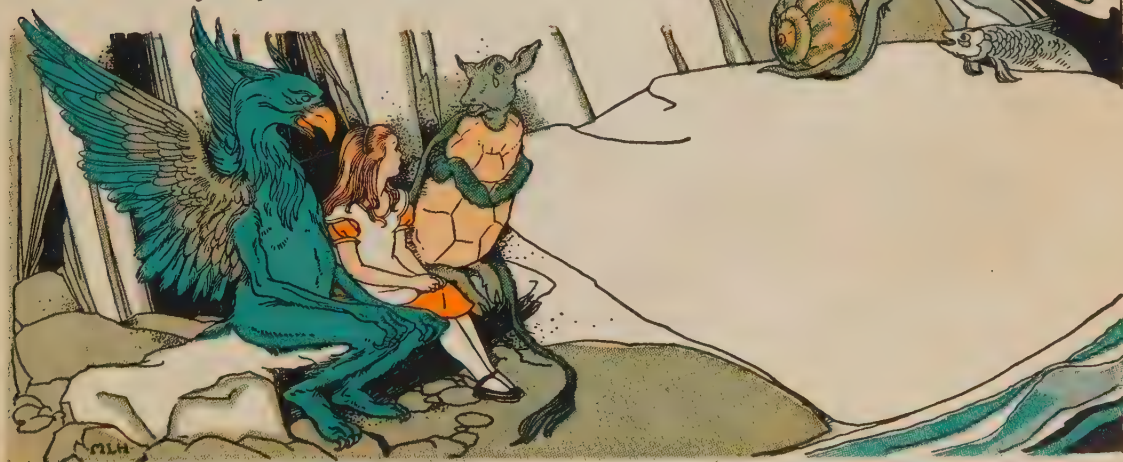
WILL you walk a little faster?"
 said a whiting to a snail,
 "There's a porpoise close behind us,
 and he's treading on my tail!
 See how eagerly the lobsters
 and the turtles all advance!
 They are waiting on the shingle—
 will you come and join the dance?
 Will you, won't you; will you, won't you;
 will you join the dance?
 Will you, won't you; will you, won't you;
 won't you join the dance?"

*In the story of *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll, Alice went down a rabbit hole into a strange land where she met some very queer creatures, among them the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle, who sang her this song



"You can really have no notion
how delightful it will be,
When they take us up and throw us,
with the lobsters, out to sea!"
But the snail replied: "Too far, too far!"
and gave a look askance—
Said he thanked the whiting kindly,
but he would not join the dance.
Would not, could not; would not, could not;
would not join the dance.
Would not, could not; would not, could not;
could not join the dance.

"What matters it how far we go?"
his scaly friend replied;
"There is another shore you know
upon the other side.
The further off from England,
the nearer is to France,
Then turn not pale, beloved snail,
but come and join the dance.
Will you, won't you; will you, won't you;
will you join the dance?
Will you, won't you; will you, won't you;
won't you join the dance?"



Lewis Carroll, an English professor, told the story of Alice for some little girls he took rowing at Oxford. In his *Looking Glass Suite*, Deems Taylor expresses in music the further adventures of Alice when she walked through the looking glass.

How the Brazilian Beetles Got Their Gorgeous Coats*

ELSIE SPICER EELLS

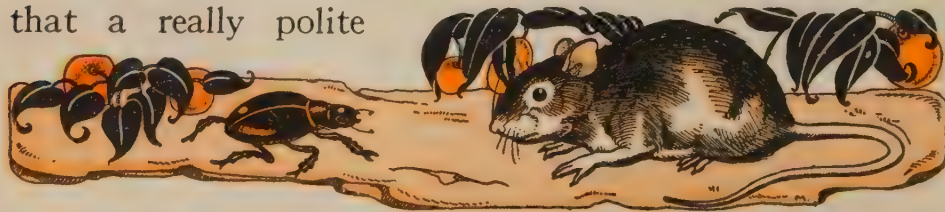
IN Brazil the beetles have beautiful, coloured, hard-shelled coats upon their backs like precious stones. Once upon a time, years and years ago, they had ordinary plain, brown coats. This is how it happened that the Brazilian beetle earned a new coat.

One day a little brown beetle was crawling along a wall when a big grey rat ran out of a hole in the wall and looked down scornfully at the little beetle. "Oh, ho!" he said to the beetle, "how slowly you crawl along. You'll never get anywhere in the world. Just look at me and see how fast I can run."

The big grey rat ran to the end of the wall, wheeled around, and came back to the place where the little beetle was slowly crawling along at only a tiny distance from where the rat had left her.

"Don't you wish that you could run like that?" said the big grey rat to the little brown beetle.

"You are surely a fast runner," replied the little brown beetle, politely. Her mother had taught her that a really polite



*Taken from *Fairy Tales from Brazil*. Copyright, 1917, by Dodd, Mead & Company, Inc.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

beetle never boasts about her own accomplishments.

A bright green-and-gold parrot* in the mango tree over the wall had heard the conversation. "How would you like to race with the beetle?" he asked the big grey rat. "I live next door to the tailor bird," he added, "and just to make the race exciting, I'll offer a bright-coloured coat as a prize to the one who wins the race. You may choose for it any colour you like and I'll have it made to order."

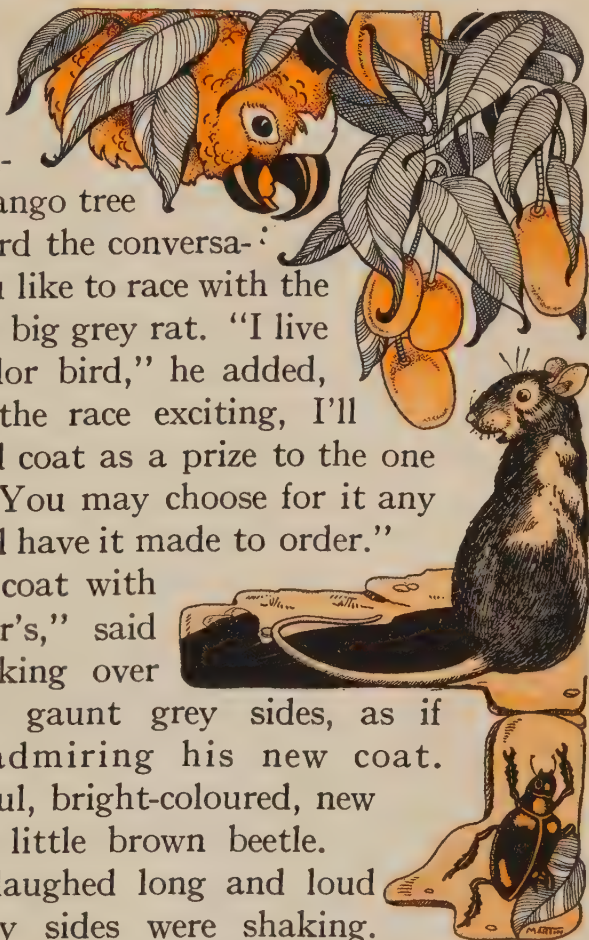
"I'd like a yellow coat with stripes like the tiger's," said the big grey rat, looking over his shoulder at his gaunt grey sides, as if he were already admiring his new coat.

"I'd like a beautiful, bright-coloured, new coat, too," said the little brown beetle.

The big grey rat laughed long and loud until his gaunt grey sides were shaking.

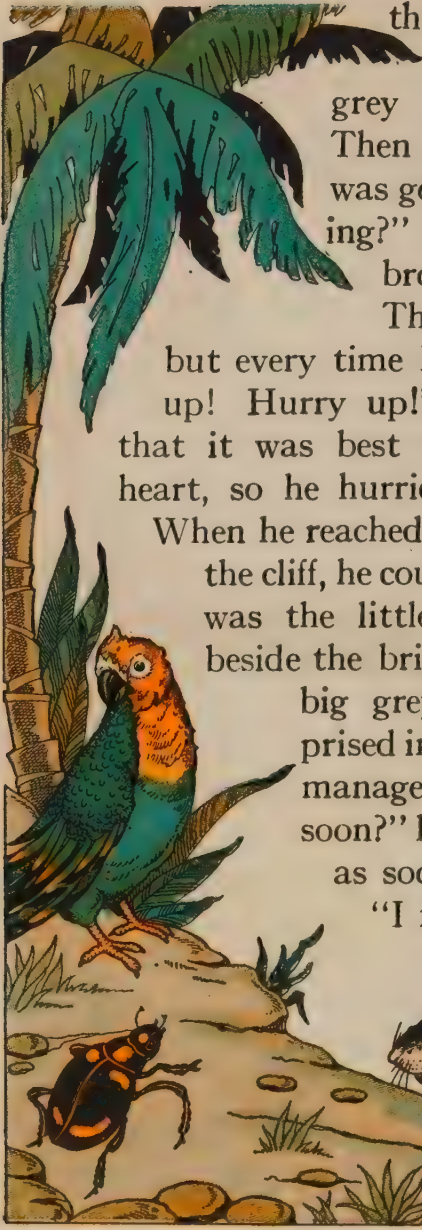
"Why, you talk just as if you thought you had a chance to win the race," he said, when he could speak.

The bright green-and-gold parrot set the royal palm tree at the top of the cliff as the goal of the race. He gave the signal to start and then he flew away to



*The brilliant color of Brazil has inspired music as well as folk tales. "Thou Brilliant Bird" from the opera, *Pearl of Brazil*, by the romantic French composer, Félicien David, has all the flare and brilliant color of the parrot.

M Y B O O K H O U S E



the royal palm tree to watch for the end of the race. The big grey rat ran as fast as he could. Then he thought how very tired he was getting. "What's the use of hurrying?" he said to himself. "The little brown beetle cannot possibly win."

Then he started to run more slowly, but every time his heart beat, it said, "Hurry up! Hurry up!" The big grey rat decided that it was best to obey the little voice in his heart, so he hurried just as fast as he could.

When he reached the royal palm tree at the top of the cliff, he could hardly believe his eyes. There was the little brown beetle sitting quietly beside the bright green-and-gold parrot. The big grey rat had never been so surprised in all his life. "How did you ever manage to run fast enough to get here so soon?" he asked the little brown beetle as soon as he could catch his breath. "I flew here," said the little beetle.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

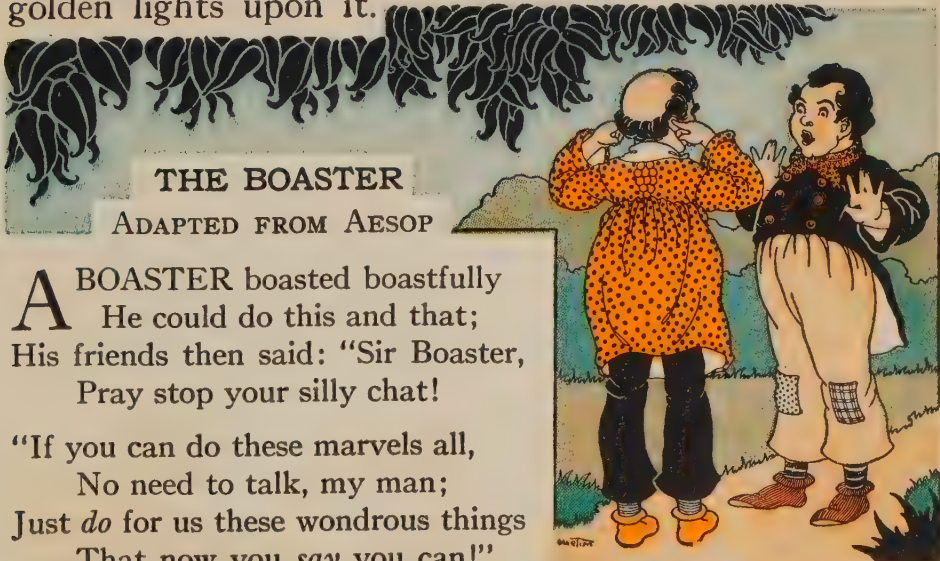
"I did not know you could fly," said the big grey rat in a subdued little voice.

"After this," said the parrot, "never judge any one by his looks alone. You never can tell where you may find concealed wings. You have lost the prize and the beetle has won it."



Then the parrot said to the little brown beetle, "What colour do you want your new coat to be?"

The little brown beetle looked up at the bright green-and-gold parrot, at the green-and-gold palm trees above their heads, at the golden sunshine upon the distant green hills. "I choose a coat of green-and-gold," she said. And from that day to this, the Brazilian beetle has worn a coat of green, with golden lights upon it.



THE BOASTER

ADAPTED FROM AESOP

A BOASTER boasted boastfully
He could do this and that;
His friends then said: "Sir Boaster,
Pray stop your silly chat!

"If you can do these marvels all,
No need to talk, my man;
Just *do* for us these wondrous things
That now you *say* you can!"



Chanticleer and Partlet

RETOLD FROM THE NUN'S
PRIEST'S TALE BY CHAUCER ★

A widow had a cottage near a grove within a little dale, and in a yard fenced round about with sticks, she kept a cock called Chanticleer. In all the land of crowing there was not his peer! His voice was like an organ in the church, his crowing was more sure to tell the time of day than any clock. His comb was redder than the coral fine; his bill was black as jet; his color was burnt gold.

This gentle cock had seven hens to do his bidding, and of these the fairest was Dame Partlet. So mannerly, so wise and gay was she, that Chanticleer loved none among the hens one half so well, and it was joy to hear them sing together when the sun began to shine.

Now it befell one morn as Chanticleer slept on his perch by fair Dame Partlet's side, that he began to groan like one who has been troubled by some horrid dream.

"O my heart!" Dame Partlet cried. "What aileth you?"

*In the 14th Century, when Chaucer wrote, animal stories were favorite tales of the common people of England, who had years before begun to entertain themselves with tales of *Reynard the Fox* which came over to England, from France and Germany.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

He answered her: "My love, I pray you, be not troubled by my groaning, but, alack, I dreamt that I was in a sorry case. Methought I roamed within our yard when there I saw a beast, like to a hound, who would have seized me by the throat. His color was betwixt a yellow and a red. His tail and both his ears were tipped with black. His snout was small, and round and glowing were his eyes. Of him I was afeared."

"For shame!" Dame Partlet cried. "How dare you say unto your love that anything can make you feel afeared! Have you no manlike heart, and yet you have a beard? What means a dream? Why nothing, certainly."

Her words bring shame to Chanticleer. He heeds his dream no more but cries: "My lady Partlet fair, I have such bliss when that I see the beauty of your face, you are so scarlet red about the eye, it maketh all my fear to die."

With that he flew down from the beam, and, clucking, gan his hens to call.

Royal he was; he was no more afeared.
He looketh as it were a grim lion.
And on his toes he roameth up and down;
Him deigneth not to set his foot to ground,
He chucketh when he hath a corn y-found,
And to him rennen then his wivies all.

But suddenly a sorry thing befell. A sly old fox that had been living in the grove for three long years, that very night had found a passage through the hedge and burst into the yard. There in a bed of cabbages he hid

M Y B O O K H O U S E

himself and lay in wait till it was past the noontide of the day, biding his time to fall on Chanticleer.

Fair in the sun, Dame Partlet and her sisters lay, to bathe them in the sand. The sun shone bright and Chanticleer sang merry as a mermaid in the sea. But, as he cast his eyes upon a butterfly that flitted o'er the cabbage bed, he was aware of this false fox that lay full low. Then had he ne'er a wish to crow, but cried anon: "Cluck, cluck," and up did start as one that was affrighted in his heart. He would have fled but that the fox cried out:

"Now gentle sir, alas, where will you go? Be not afraid of me that am your friend. I am not come to do you harm. In truth, I only came to hear you sing. You have a voice as lovely as the angel's song. My lord your father—bless his soul!—and likewise your good mother have been guests of mine and visited my house. So certainly I wish to please you, too. But when men speak of singing, I am wont to say, 'Save Chanticleer, I never heard one sing as did his father of a morning. He would stand upon his tiptoes, stretch his neck both long and small, and, that he might give forth the fulness of his voice, would close his eyes, and then how he would sing! Ah, there was never any cock in this land or another that could equal him in wisdom and in song.' Now, sir, for holy charity, shut fast your eyes and let me hear if you can sing as did your father in his day."

At this, great Chanticleer was filled with vanity and

U P O N E P A I R O F S T A I R S

pride, and he began to beat his wings as one that could not see the fox's sly and cunning lie, so charmed was he with silly words of flattery. He stood high on his toes; he stretched his neck, and ah, he held his eyes fast closed, that he might cry his loudest for the nonce.

Then up the fox did start while that the cock had still no opened eye to see. He seized him by the throat and bore him off in triumph, prisoned fast between his teeth.

Alack! such cry was never made by ladies in that sorry day when Troy was conquered, as those hennies made when they had sight of Chanticleer; and louder than them all Dame Partlet cried.

The widow and her daughters heard the hennies cry and make such woe, and out of doors they ran to see the fox slip toward the grove, the cock fast in his mouth. They cried, "Out harrow! Well away! Ha, ha, the Fox!" And after him they ran. With sticks and staves, came many another too. There Collie ran, the dog, and Malkin with a distaff in her hand.

Ran cow and calf and eek the very hogs,
So were they feared for barking of the dogs,
And shouting of the men and women eek;

They ran as though they thought their hearts would break!

They yelled like fiends; the duckies cried; the geese for fear flew over trees; out of their hive came a swarm of bees.

The cock, meanwhile, thought out a plan and thus at length, in spite of fears, he spake:

"If I were you, good sir, I would not let this rout of

M Y B O O K H O U S E



knaves put me to shame by howling all unanswered at my heels. I'd turn about and cry, 'A murrain take you all! In spite of you, I'll carry off this cock and eat him in the wood!' "

So Chanticleer did wake the pride in Master Fox. "In faith," quoth Master Fox, "I'll tell them who I am!"

But, as he dropped his jaws to let the words come forth, all suddenly he loosed the cock who thus broke free and flew up high into a tree. And now the fox beheld how that his prize was gone. Sore was his grief and yet he thought: "I'll fool that cock again."

"Alas!" quoth he. "O Chanticleer, alas! I have done wrong to make you so afeared. But, sir, I did it of no bad intent. Come down and let me tell you what I meant. I'll speak the truth, God help me so!"

"Nay then," quoth Chanticleer. "Beshrew me, if you fool me any oftener than once. You shall no more through silly flattery get me to wink and close mine eyes.

For he that winketh when he ought to see,
God will never save from thee!"

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



A Happy Day in the City

OLIVE BEAUPRÉ MILLER

NED and his mother stood on the corner by the florist's shop waiting for the trolley car. Soon it came jangling up the track. Ned waved his hand to the motorman, and the big wheels squealed like a dozen little pigs as the car slowed down and stopped.

Ned had the money for their fare held tightly in his hand—he always gave it to the conductor himself. He and Mother stepped aboard; and, as the car started up with a jerk, they stumbled inside and made their way unsteadily to the only seat that was not already filled.

Oh, but Ned was happy! He loved to go downtown on the trolley car. He loved the bumping and the jiggling and all the wonderful sights. Today he was especially happy because he was going to meet his cousin, Ruth, and her mother, who lived in the country; and they were

M Y B O O K H O U S E

to have a long, beautiful day together in the city. He did not know what they were going to do to have a jolly time. Mother had kept that a secret, but he had seen Father slip out of the front door very quickly and mysteriously that morning as if he were carrying something; and he guessed—but, then he only guessed, he didn't really know, because it was a secret.

"When I grow up," cried Ned, as their motorman clanged his bell loudly, "I'm going to be a motorman!"

"Oh!" said his mother, "I thought you said yesterday you wanted to be a hurdy-gurdy man and have a street piano and a monkey."

"No!" announced Ned positively, "I'm going to be a motorman, and bang my foot down on the bell and make a big noise—clang, clang! And all the people will run to get out of the way of my car!"

So they went on for almost an hour, past apartment houses and little uptown stores, right into the hurly-burly of downtown. Then Mother pressed a button beside their seat to let the conductor know they wanted to get off. The car stopped, and they stepped down on a crowded crossing among automobiles and people, right under the tall iron framework where an elevated train rushed by with a roaring, rumbling noise overhead.

Next they walked over to the station where Ruth's train would be coming from the country. They crossed the clean, marble-paved floor of the station and went up the broad stairs to the place where the trains came

The beauty of the country has long inspired poets, artists, and musicians, but only modern poets and composers have found beauty in the city. *Skyscrapers* by John Alden Carpenter is a ballet of the modern city.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

in. A great iron fence shut off the tracks from the rest of the station, but a guard in blue uniform was already opening the gate to the platform where Ruth's train was pulling in, and a number of people were crowding about to meet friends whom they were expecting.

"Oh, I see her! I see her!" piped Ned. "And there's Aunt Frances, too!" Sure enough! There they were, coming along in the midst of the crowd. Soon everybody was kissing everybody else, and Ruth was telling Ned about her new kittens, and the garden she had made, and how she could read in her primer, all at once.

"Where are we going today?" asked Ruth.

"Oh, that's going to be a s'prise! You mustn't ask," said Ned.

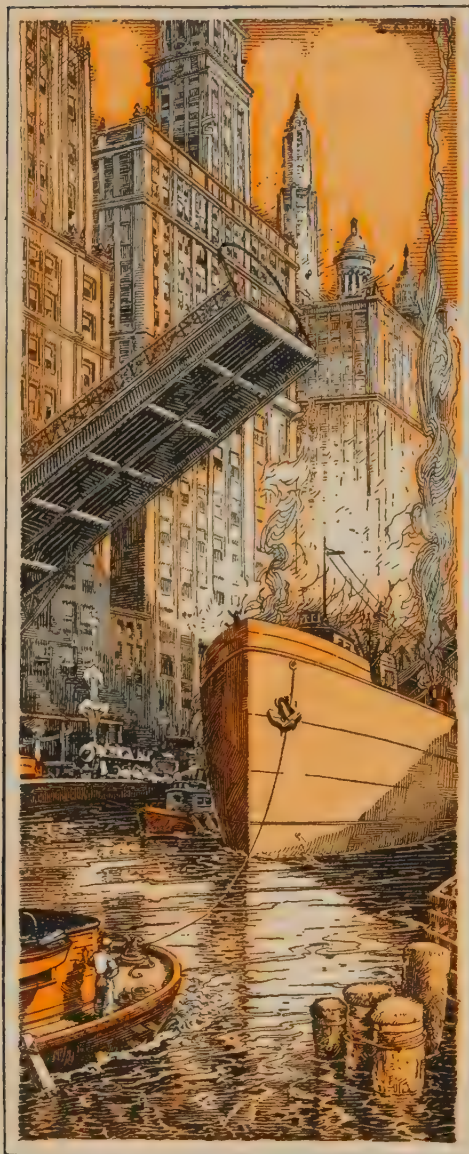
"But I want to know," insisted Ruth, who never could wait for a surprise.

"Well this morning I saw Father slip out the front door and I'm almost sure he was carrying . . . !" But there Ned stopped, smiling mysteriously, and he would not say another word.

Mother and Aunt Frances started on ahead, talking, with the children following behind them. They went down a long flight of stairs and out-of-doors to a place where they all climbed up into a bus and now they were off for the big stores uptown. But they had only gone a little way when, all at once, they heard a loud alarm bell ringing, and the bus suddenly stopped. Ruth and Ned turned around and looked excitedly out of the window.

Adventures in a Perambulator by John Alden Carpenter is a child's impression of the city. Jazz, like Carpenter's music, with its tricks of accent and rhythm, its color and variety of tone and volume, well suits the city.

M Y B O O K H O U S E



They had just come to the bridge over the river, and, as the bell kept on ringing, people were hurrying and scurrying to get across. No sooner was the bridge empty than a chain was stretched over the approach to it, and a big policeman took his place there to prevent anyone else from stepping on it. Then the huge structure parted in the middle, and the two sides were raised straight up in the air by machinery from a little house on shore.

Next, a great steamer with tall funnels—too tall to have passed under the bridge when it was down—was pulled by a little puffing, smoking tug slowly past the crossing; and the little tug whistled shrilly for the next bridge up river to open out of its way.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

"Oh, Ned!" cried Ruth, as she watched all this with breathless interest, "I wonder how it would be if anybody would just hang on to the bridge and swing right up with it into the air?"

"Well," laughed Mother, "unless 'anybody' was a fly, I think 'anybody' would not hang on very long."

"Splash! He'd go into the water," said Ned, "and we'd have to fish him out."

When the bridge was down again, the bus went jiggling and joggling on, till it came to a great store where everybody got out. The store took up a whole block and was many, many stories high. All about were buildings so tall that the street seemed only a narrow slit between them. The bigness of those buildings made Ruth feel small and lonely; so she came nearer to Ned and took fast hold of his hand. But that wasn't the way the big buildings made Ned feel at all.

"When I get big," he cried, "I'm going to be a builder, and build way, way up till I can touch the sky!" As he looked up to think how very high he was going to build, he stubbed his toe and fell flat on the sidewalk, pulling Ruth half-way down with him.

"My dear little boy," laughed his mother as she helped him up and brushed him off, "before you can build to the sky, you will have to learn to look where you take your next step!"

All the buildings around were gray—all turned a soft,

An American in Paris, by George Gershwin, is a musical picture of the city, its noises, bustle, and confusion. It is American composers like Gershwin and Carpenter who have really felt the thrill of the big city.

M Y B O O K H O U S E

pearly gray by the city smoke. Everything was gray except the bright colored signboards hanging high up in the air, and the gay things in the shop windows.

Mother and Aunt Frances and Ned and Ruth walked into the great store. There were many people inside, but the store was so large it did not seem crowded.

There were any number of counters about, covered with lace and ribbons and gloves and handkerchiefs and many other things; and, in one place, there was an opening in the ceiling, four or five stories high. To look way way up so far, almost took Ned's breath away. And there way up at the top, the roof of the great opening was a dome made of colored glass that shone and glittered like jewels. "Just like the castles in fairy land," said Ruth.

Mother and Aunt Frances stopped at the lace counter and the ribbon counter and the glove counter. It wasn't very interesting looking at those things; and Ned was stooping down looking in the lower part of the glass showcase where the buttons were—entertaining himself with thinking what fine wheels for his trains some of the big buttons would make—when, all of a sudden, Aunt Frances turned around to look for Ruth. She wasn't there at all! She had disappeared! There wasn't a sign of her anywhere to be seen!

Aunt Frances called her, but she did not answer; not one of the saleswomen had noticed where she went, and neither had the big, important floorwalkers. So Mother, Ned, and Aunt Frances hunted and hunted; and, at last,

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

they found her a long way off looking at a pile of little girls' parasols, and half-covered up by a yellow one that she had opened over her head.

"Why, Ruth Maxwell Martin!" said her mother. "We've been hunting fifteen minutes for you. You're a big enough little girl to know you must not wander away."

Ruth hung her head and looked foolish, but Mother knew how much she wanted the little yellow umbrella; so she bought it for her and Ruth stood under it looking like the happiest little girl in town.

Then Aunt Frances said, "Most of our shopping isn't very interesting to the children. Let's leave them for an hour in the playroom."

So they all crossed over to a row of elevators, and they got into one with a great crowd of other people and they went up to the fourth floor. Then they passed through the beautiful toy section and they saw all the dolls and the dolls' houses and dolls' furniture and dolls' clothes. And they saw the toy animals and the toy villages and the toy automobiles and the toy aeroplanes and toy trains, that would really run by electricity; and they saw toy stoves, that would really cook by electricity; and oh, such a number of other things, that Ruth let out a big sigh.

"I wish I could *live* in a place like this!" she said.

"Well, you can live here for an hour," laughed her mother, as they went on into the playroom. A great number of children were there, laughing and chattering, playing in sand-boxes, sliding down wooden slides, rocking back and

M Y B O O K H O U S E



forth on great horses as big as life, riding on little merry-go-rounds, or swinging in the swings. Ned and Ruth had time to try everything that was fun in the whole place before their mothers came back again to get them.

When they all started out once more, the hands of the big clock above the elevators pointed to twelve o'clock; so they went into the nice, clean, white marble washroom and got ready for lunch. Then they went up to the restaurant. The room, where they ate, had a beautiful fountain in the center with gold fish swimming in it. Ned and Ruth watched the fish dart around and could hardly bear to leave them even to order lunch. They sat down at a table that had a white cloth on it and a candlestick with a pretty pink shade in the centre; and, pretty soon, a neat young woman in black, wearing a nice white

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

apron, came and brought Mother and Aunt Frances each a card that had a list of all the good things they might have to eat. She took their order and went off; and, when she came back, her big tray was loaded. There was some orange and banana salad in a pretty nest of lettuce for each of those hungry people. There were lots of buns covered with sugar and currants, and four little bottles of milk. For dessert they each had chocolate ice-cream.

"Oh, I'm having *such* a good time!" said Ruth. "But Ned says it's a secret where we were going this afternoon. I just do wish I knew."

"Well," said Mother, "I'll tell you, Ruth. We're all going home and take a nap!"

"Oh, no, no, no!" shrieked both children.

After lunch they left the big store, and came out on



M Y B O O K H O U S E

the crowded street. Such a number of people as there were, all busily hurrying somewhere! There wasn't any lingering here. Everybody had something to do and was keeping right about his business of getting there to do it.

In the street, there seemed a tangled mass of automobiles and people. But there was a policeman on the corner and, when Ruth and Ned reached there, they saw that what had seemed such a tangled mass was very orderly after all. When the policeman blew his whistle and held up his hand, all the automobiles and all the people going in one direction started up while the others waited. And, when he whistled again, those going in the other direction were off, so they never interfered with each other.

"When I grow up, I'm going to be a big policeman," said Ned.

"Then you'll hold up your hand and make all the automobiles and all the people wait while I cross the street, won't you?" said Ruth.

Soon they came to the wide boulevard where were all the finest small shops in the city. On the farther side of the street was a pretty strip of green park with shrubbery, flowers, and statues, that stretched all the way up the avenue; and beyond that strip, sparkled the blue waters of the lake. But Ned, Ruth, Mother, and Aunt Frances were chiefly interested in the windows of the shops on their own side of the street as they walked along. Ned stopped in front of the electrical shop where there were washing machines and fans and a little toy train all running by

U P O N E P A I R O F S T A I R S

electricity. Ruth lingered by the big waxen figures of ladies dressed in such beautiful clothes that they seemed like princesses out of a fairy tale. Mother and Aunt Frances looked in at the linen and jewelry, and they all stopped together to peep at the candy and the flowers.

"I know where we're going," whispered Ned to Ruth. "To Father's office!"

Sure enough. They went into a large office building, rode up in the elevator, and walked down a long hall into Father's office. There was Father working busily at his desk.

"Well, hello!" he cried, as he whirled round in his chair, kissed Ruth, put his arm around Ned, shook hands with Aunt Frances, and smiled at Mother.

"Oh, Uncle," cried Ruth, "please tell me, where are we going this afternoon?"

But Father wouldn't tell either. He just smiled and left the room. While they were waiting for him to come back, the children went over to the window and looked out. They were up very high and the people and automobiles in the street below looked very small.

Near by, on the other side of the street, was a great stone building with two fine bronze lions, on either side of the broad steps, guarding the entrance. And, in the carved border about the roof of the building where Ruth and Ned could see them clearly, a number of pigeons roosted; while others flew circling about in the air or dropped down into the park below to bathe and play in the waters of the fountain. Farther on, beyond the green stretch of

M Y B O O K H O U S E

parkway, they could just see the tops of trains on a track down below the level of the ground. From the engines, rose little white curls of smoke that floated away and melted into the soft haze hanging over the lake beyond. Sometimes the sunlight pierced the haze and flashed back brightly from the water, from the white sail of a boat, or the wing of a great white bird. It was all very soft and lovely.

In a few moments, back came Father; and, there, the children saw he had the big picnic basket over his arm.

"Oh, Uncle, where are we going?" cried Ruth.

"Goody! Goody! A picnic! I thought so!" piped Ned.

"How will Lincoln Park do?" asked Father.

Soon they had climbed to the top of a bus from which



U P O N E P A I R O F S T A I R S

they could see everything as they rolled along down the boulevard, past rows of handsome houses.

At last they came into a park and passed a little harbor where a number of launches were anchored. Then they got off the bus beside a pretty knoll with a fine view over the lake. There, beneath a tree, Mother and Aunt Frances sat on a bench to rest while Father put the lunch basket down and took the children to the zoo to see the animals and birds.

In the birdhouse there was such a screeching, they could hardly hear themselves think; and in the cages round about, there was every kind of strange bird. Some were long-legged, some were short-legged, and some were queer, indeed. One old pelican, strutting proudly around the pool seemed to think he owned the place.

"When you grow up, Ned, how would you like to be a pelican?" asked Father with a twinkle in his eye.

They walked on past the zebras, the llamas, the camels, and the buffaloes; and they came back by the pits of the bears, the foxes, and the wolves. They saw the giraffes eating hay out of a high trough, and the elephant swinging his trunk. They spent a long time laughing at the antics of the monkeys; and, last of all, they visited the great house where the lions, tigers, and leopards were kept.

"I'd like to see a real wild tiger prowling around in the jungle," said Ned.

"Oh, dear! I shouldn't!" said Ruth. "What would you do, Ned, if you did see one?"

"I think," answered Father very solemnly, "that Ned

M Y B O O K H O U S E



would run after the lion like a brave man and sprinkle salt on his tail!"

By the time they got back to Mother and Aunt Frances, it was time to eat supper. Lots of other people were picnicking nearby with goodies all spread out on table cloths on the grass. Children were romping and playing, and some were wading in the lake. Before they knew it, supper was all spread out on the grass. My, how good that supper tasted out in the beautiful park!

It was growing dusk and the little Japanese lanterns were lit when Aunt Frances said, "Now, Ruthie, we must start for home, or you'll never be able to keep your eyes open until we get on the train."

So Father hailed a bus and they all climbed up on top and started off for home. Ruth and Ned were so tired, after all they'd done that day, that they just sat and grinned at each other. They never said a single word, but they kept thinking just the same, "What a good time we had today!"

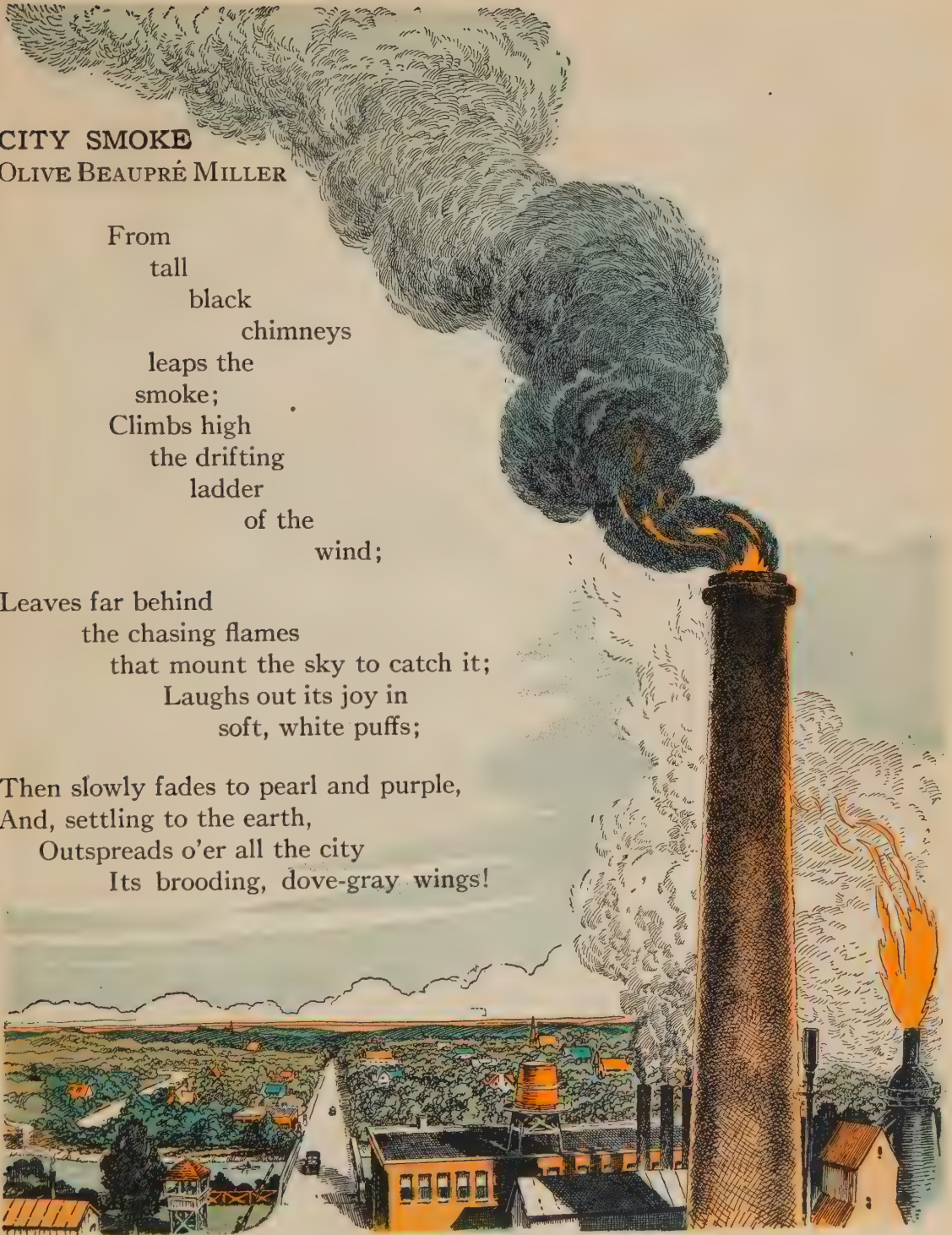
CITY SMOKE

OLIVE BEAUPRÉ MILLER

From
tall
black
chimneys
leaps the
smoke;
Climbs high
the drifting
ladder
of the
wind;

Leaves far behind
the chasing flames
that mount the sky to catch it;
Laughs out its joy in
soft, white puffs;

Then slowly fades to pearl and purple,
And, settling to the earth,
Outspreads o'er all the city
Its brooding, dove-gray wings!



The Shepherd.

How sweet is the Shepherds sweet lot.
From the morn to the evening he strays.
He shall follow his sheep all the day
And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

For he hears the lambs innocent call.
And he hears the ewes tender reply.
He is watchful while they are in peace.
For they know when their Shepherd is nigh.

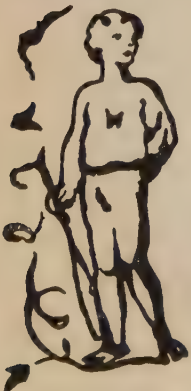


William Blake wrote these poems in 1789, and made the pictures seen on these pages. Blake made the engravings, printed his own books, and he and his wife bound and colored them by hand.



The Ecchoing Green

The Sun does arise
And make happy the skies.
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring.
The sky-lark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around
To the bells cheerful sound,
While our sports shall be seen
On the Ecchoing Green.



In his own time Blake was famous as an artist, but his great flights of fancy in poetry were loved only by a few, though he was a forerunner of the freer, more imaginative age in poetry much appreciated today



The Birds' St. Valentine's Day

Retold from The Parlement of Foules

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

ON ST. VALENTINE'S DAY, the birds always gathered together before good Mother Nature to choose their mates for the year. They met in a fresh, green meadow, full of blossoming trees, that stood beside a river. And Cupid, little elfin sprite who flits on dainty wings, shot magic arrows, laughing, and awaked their hearts to love. Soon all those birds began to clamor for a mate, that they might fly away and build their nests in tree or hedgerow. And, on a hill of flowers, sweet Mother Nature sat. As the summer sunshine is lovelier than the starlight, so was Mother Nature fairer than all other creatures. Blue, white, and yellow flowers were springing all about. In the clear, bright water, little fishes swam; they whisked their small red fins; their scales gleamed silver-bright. Rabbits skipped at play; small beasties leapt and bounded; on every bough the birds sang!

There was joy there a thousand-fold more than any man can tell!

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



Now Mother Nature held upon her hand an eagle, the goodliest and kindest of all the birdies there. So very sweet was she, that Mother Nature bent and dropped a kiss upon her beak. In easy voice then Mother Nature spoke: "My birds, each year on good St. Valentine's Day, you gather here to choose your mates. Now well you know, that royal eagle standing there before me is the best among you. I do decree that he shall have first choice of all the pretty birdies here! Until he chooses, none shall have a mate."

M Y B O O K H O U S E

With bent head then, the royal eagle spoke.

"I choose with heart and thought that lovely eagle, Mother Nature, which you hold upon your hand." When then she heard these words, the pretty eagle blushed as red as any rose. She neither answered "No" nor "Yes," so modest, shy, and sweet was she.

But all at once there spoke another mighty eagle.

"That shall not be!" he cried. "I love this lady better, by St. John, than you! She should be mine!"

"Now, sirs," a third great eagle said. "This lady should be mine! I love her better than you all!"

With that those three great eagles each began to screech and plead his case. From morning till the sun set, they screeched and screeched and screeched. And while they screeched, as Mother Nature had decreed, no other bird could choose his mate. At last these other birds, impatient, made commotion. The goose, the cuckoo, and the duck all cried: "Kek, kek! Cuckoo! Quack, quack! If these three eagles can't decide their case, pray let us speak and settle their affair."

"Hold your tongues there!" Mother Nature said. "You shall elect from every flock, from birds of prey—seed-eating birds, worm-eating birds, and waterfowl—one bird as spokesman to advise the eagles here."

The birds of prey then chose the falcon. In stately wise he spoke. "We'll never settle this affair by prattle! It seems there'll have to be a battle!"

"All ready then! We'll fight!" the eagles cried.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



"Nay, sirs," the falcon said. "I mean to say the boldest and the gentlest should have this lady here."

But still the eagles screeched. The waterfowls then laid their heads together. Each spoke large mouthfuls of cack-cackles till they chose the goose as spokesman.

"Let each of these three eagles give this maiden up and choose another mate!" the goose advised.

"Fit reason for a goose!" In anger spoke the sparrow hawk. "What bird of any breeding would give his true love up and choose another mate!"

For seed fowl next the turtledove did speak.

"No lover should ever change," he said. "Though his fair lady doth refuse him, let him serve her all his days."

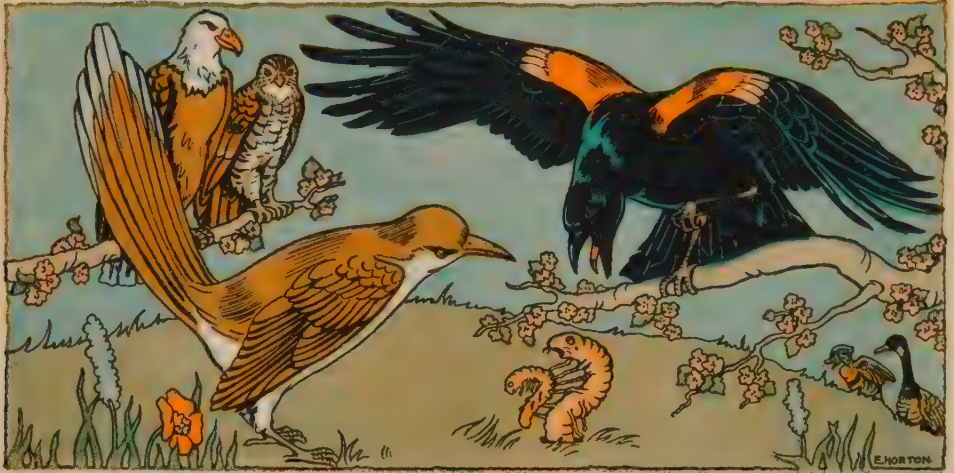
"By my hat!" then quacked the duck, "who can find wit in that—to wait a lifetime for a maid?"

"Yay, yay! Kek, kek!" agreed the goose. "There's more than one fair birdie one might choose as mate."

"Fie, churl," the haughty falcon cried. "You geese know not what true love is nor can you guess!"

"Let these three eagles live alone," the cuckoo cried. "And let them take no mate at all!"

M Y B O O K H O U S E



"Live all their lives alone!" the blackbird shrieked. "Who would have thought of that save thee, thou cuckoo, who dost murder little worms upon the branch!"

"Now peace!" cried Mother Nature, wearied out. "'Tis I who am commanding here. Though all have spoken, we are still no nearer settling this affair. My pretty eagle here, she shall herself decide the question. She, herself, shall choose which of these three who seek her, she will have to be her mate."

With timid voice the pretty eagle spoke.

"Almighty Queen," she scarcely more than whispered. "I pray you let me wait a year to choose my mate. I am too young, too young to wed this year!"

"If such be your desire, there is no more to say," good Mother Nature answered. "My three fine eagles, you must wait a year and she shall make her choice when once again St. Valentine's Day is come!"

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

Then Mother Nature turned to all the other birds and gave to each his mate. O Lord, the bliss and joy that then those birds did make! Each one stretched out his wings to hug his little mate. They twined their necks about each other, in all things thanking her who was their gracious Queen. And ere they flew away to build their nests and raise their young, they sang a merry song to honor Mother Nature:



The Doll under the Briar Rosebush

JORGEN MOE

*Translated from the Norwegian by
Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen*

THERE was once a little girl, and her name was Beate. She was only five-years old, but a bright and good little girl she was.

On her birthday her father had given her a beautiful straw hat. There were red ribbons around it; I can't tell you how pretty it was. Her mother had given her a pair of yellow shoes and the daintiest white dress. But her old aunt had given her the very best present of all; it was a doll, with a sweet pretty face and dark brown curls. She was a perfect beauty in every respect. There was nothing the matter with her except that the left eyebrow was painted a tiny bit too high up.

"It looks as if she were frowning a little. I wonder if she is not quite pleased?" asked Beate.

"Oh, yes," answered her aunt, "but she doesn't know you yet. It is a habit she has of lifting her eyebrow a little when she looks closely at anyone. She only wants to find out if you are a good little girl."

"Yes, yes, and now she knows, for now that eyebrow is just like the other one," said Beate.

From The Birch and the Star: copyright, 1915. Used by the courteous permission of Row, Peterson & Company.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

Oh, how Beate grew to love that doll almost more than she loved Marie and Louise, and they were her best friends.

One day Beate was walking in the yard with her doll in her arms. The doll had a new name now, and they had become fast friends. She had called her Beate, her own name, and the name of her old aunt who had given her the doll.



It was early in the spring. There was a beautiful green spot, with fine, soft grass in one corner of the yard around the old well. There stood a big willow tree with a low trunk, and it was covered with the little yellow blossoms that children call goslings. They looked like goslings, too, for each little tassel was soft, soft yellow down and they can swim in the water, but walk? No, that they cannot do.

Now Big Beate—she wasn't more than five-years old, but she was ever so much bigger than the other one—and Little Beate, soon agreed that they would pick goslings from the tree and throw them into the well, so that they might have just as good a time as the goslings that were swimming about in the pond. It was really Big Beate who thought of this first, but Little Beate agreed immediately; you can't imagine how good she always was.



Now Big Beate climbed up into the willow and picked many pretty yellow goslings into her white apron; and, when she counted them and had counted to twenty, twice, she said that now they had enough, and Little Beate thought so too.

So she began to climb down, but that was not easy, for she had to hold her apron together with one hand and climb with the other. She thought Little Beate called up to her to throw the goslings down first, but she didn't dare to do that; she was afraid they might fall and hurt themselves.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS

Now both of them ran over to the well, and Big Beate helped her little friend to get her legs firmly fixed between the logs that were around the well, so that they might sit in comfort and watch the little goslings swim about on the water. Then gosling after gosling was dropped down; and, as soon as each one reached the water, it seemed to become alive and it moved about. Oh, what fun! Big Beate clapped her hands to the pretty little downy birds; and, when she helped Little Beate a bit, she too could clap her hands.

But after a while the little goslings would not swim any longer, but lay quite still. That was no fun at all; so Big Beate asked her namesake if she didn't think she might lean a little over the edge of the well and blow on them, for then she thought they might come to life again. Little Beate didn't answer, but she raised her left eyebrow a good deal and



M Y B O O K H O U S E

moved her right arm in the air as if she were saying, "Please don't do that, dear Big Beate! Don't you remember Mother has told us how dark it is down there in the well? Think, if you should fall in!"

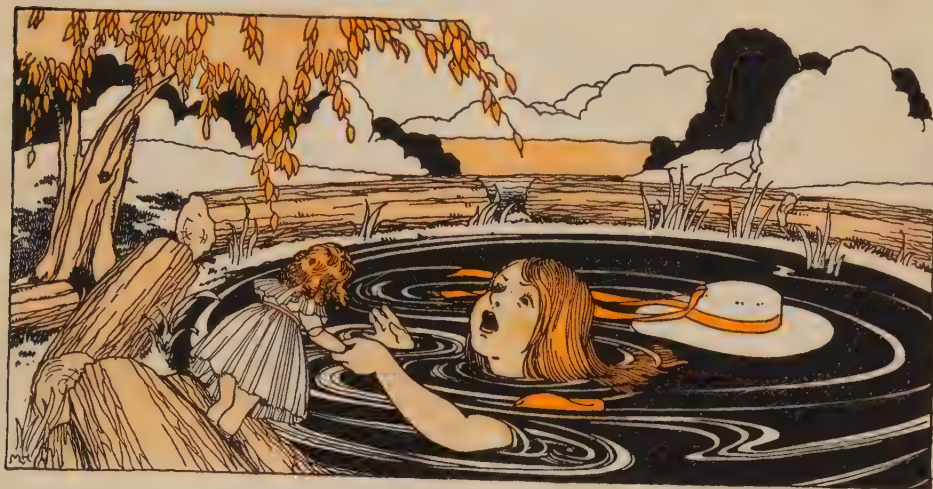
"Oh, nonsense; just see how easy it is," said Big Beate, for she thought the goslings were stupid when they didn't want to swim about.

She leaned out over the well and blew on the nearest ones. Yes, it helped, the goslings began to swim again. But those that were farthest away didn't move at all.

"What stupid little things!" said Beate, and she leaned far, far out over the edge of the well. Then her little hands slipped on the smooth log and—splash! In she fell, deep down in the water. It was so cold, so icy cold, and it closed over her head and took the straw hat, which she had got on her birthday, off her hair. She hadn't time to hear if Little Beate screamed, but I'm sure she did.

When Beate's head came over the water again she grasped the round log with both her hands, but the hands were too small and the log so wide and slippery, she couldn't hold on. Then she saw her dear friend, Little Beate, standing stiff and staring at her with her right arm stretched out to her. Big Beate hurriedly caught hold of her and Little Beate made herself as stiff as she could, and stiffer still, and stood there between the logs holding her dear friend out of the water.

UP ONE PAIR OF STAIRS



Now Beate screamed so loudly that her father and mother heard her and came running as fast as they could, and pulled her out. She was dripping wet and so cold that her teeth chattered.

The father ran to the house with her, but she begged him for heaven's sake not to leave Little Beate, for she might fall into the well, "And it's she who has saved me."

Now they put Beate to bed, and Little Beate had to sleep with her. When she had said her prayers, she hugged her little friend and said, "Never, never can I thank you enough, because you saved me from that deep well, dear Little Beate. Of course, I know that our Lord helped you to stand firm between the logs and to make yourself so strong and stiff, but it was you and no one else, who stretched your hand out to me."



LITTLE BLUE APRON

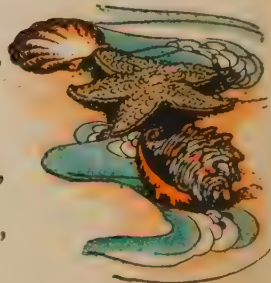
"LITTLE Blue Apron,
How do you do?
Never a stocking
And never a shoe!"

Little Blue Apron
She answered me,
"You don't wear stockings
And shoes by the sea."

"Little Blue Apron—
Never a hat?
How do you manage
To go out like that?"

"Why, what is the use
Of a hat?" said she,
"You never wear hats
When you're by the sea."

"Why, little Blue Apron, it seems to me
Very delightful to live by the sea;
But what would hatters and shoemakers do
If every one lived by the sea like you?"





VERSES ON KINGSLEY'S WATER BABIES*

WATER BABIES is a book that every child should read
If he wants to hear about the sea.
And all about Tom, the little chimney sweep,
Who was dirty, just as dirty as could be.

Tom worked for Old Grimes and he swept the chimneys clean
In the city and the country all around.
He climbed down the chimneys in the pitchy black dark,
Just as nimble as a mole underground.

Once he tramped the country lanes to a gentleman's estate,
With Grimes and his brushes as and his broom.
He climbed up the roof, but got lost in the chimneys
And came down in a little girl's room.

Such a room, so much soap, so much water for a bath,
Tom in all his life before had never seen.
And he said, "What a very dirty lady it must be
Who needs all that to get clean!"

Then he looked toward the bed and he held his breath;
The covers and the pillows were so white.
And there lay the prettiest, loveliest little girl,
With her face all shiny clean and bright!



*Born in Devon, Charles Kingsley as a boy lived and played along the seashore with all its adventurous appeal. *Water Babies* and *Westward Ho!* were the natural expression of his great love for the sea and seafaring men.

"Is everyone like that when he's washed?" said Tom.
And he tried to rub the soot off his hand.
Just then he looked around and saw an ugly black ape—
Right by his side it seemed to stand!

He turned on the ape—how dared such a thing
Stand beside that pretty little lass!
Then poor Tom saw. He, himself, was the ape,
Reflected in a big looking glass!

He was dirty! He was dirty! He burst into tears,
Tears of shame and of anger and of pride;
And he made for the chimney to sneak up again
And run away somewhere and hide.

But he upset the fender, threw the fire-irons down—
Crash! Bang! What cries! What wails!
'Twas a noise as of ten-thousand tin-kettles tied
To ten-thousand mad dogs' tails!

The little white lady jumped up in her bed
And she screamed with fright, did she.
Tom made for the window, caught hold of a branch
And climbed like a cat down a tree.





Grimes and the gardener saw him dash across the lawn,
And they and the groom gave chase.
Tom made for the woods; they were after him close,
All running at a most terrific pace.

But he gave them the slip and he came out at last
In a meadow by a sparkling little stream;
And he threw himself down on the bank and he said,
"I must be clean! I must be clean!"

He looked in the water so clean and so clear,
With the pebbles at the bottom clean and bright;
But the little silver trout when they saw his dirty face,
All dashed around, splashing in a fright.

He dipped in his hand and the water was so cool;
It was cool. It was cool, so cool!
He undressed and he said: "I'll be a fish! I'll be clean."
And he jumped in the clearest, cleanest pool.

He swam around a little, then he fell fast asleep,
And he dreamed of the church bells' call,
Of pretty green meadows and cows under trees
And then of nothing at all.



But lo, when he woke he was four-inches long,
And how was that for thrills?
For the fairies had made him a little water baby,
With a pretty lace collar of gills.

He was clean! He could swim, he was happy, he was free;
He was merry as a little water elf.
With no clothes to bother, how pleasant it was
Just to have nothing on him but himself!

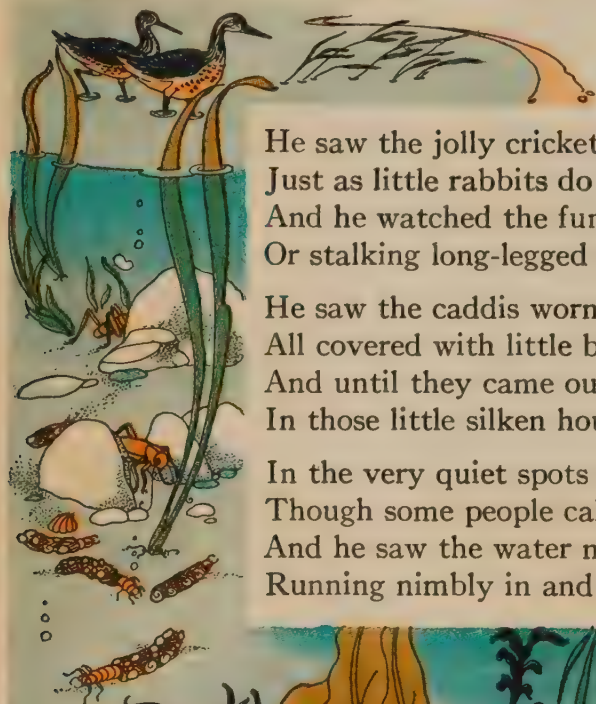
He could prowl, he could roam, he could go where he pleased;
He could watch the water world all day.
Hard old Grimes couldn't make him work again;
He had nothing now to do but play!

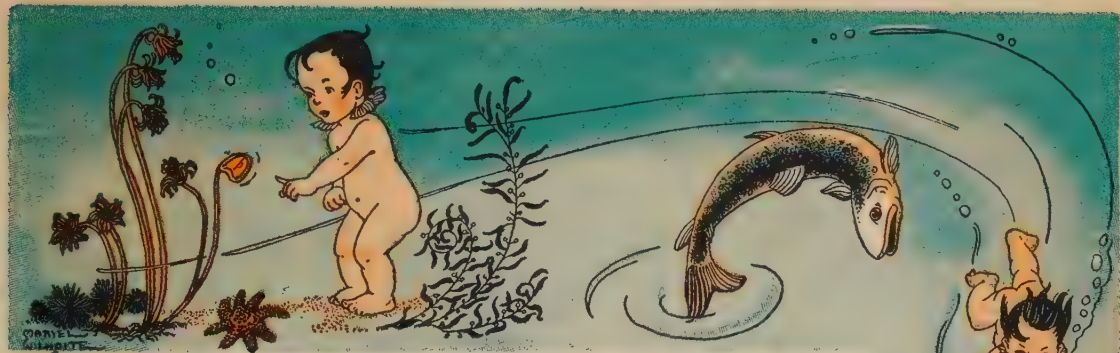


He saw the jolly crickets running in and out of stones,
Just as little rabbits do on land;
And he watched the funny sandpipers peeping out of rocks,
Or stalking long-legged in the sand.

He saw the caddis worms spin their houses out of silk,
All covered with little bits of shell;
And until they came out as handsome caddis flies,
In those little silken houses they would dwell.

In the very quiet spots he saw the water forests,
Though some people called them weeds;
And he saw the water monkeys (six-legged, of course)
Running nimbly in and out among the reeds.



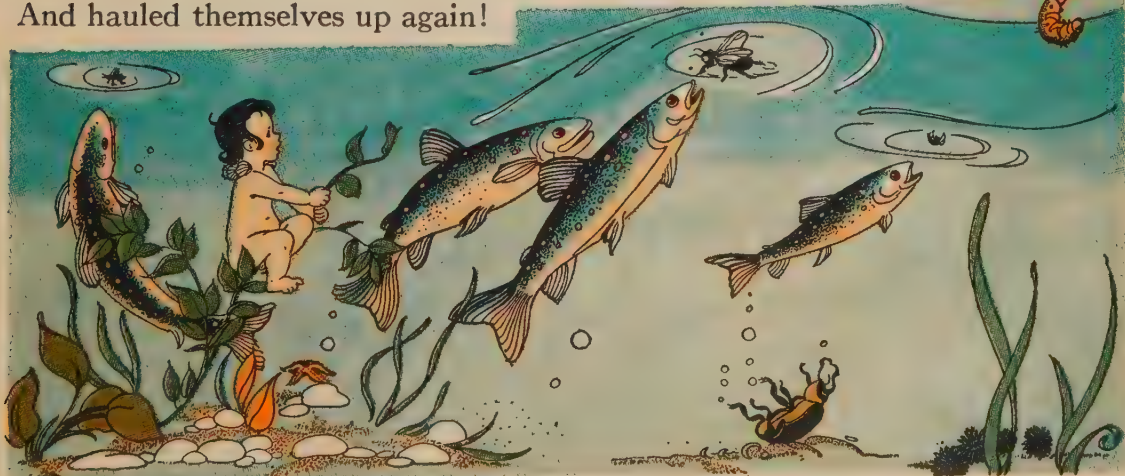


There were water flowers, too; he tried to pick them once;
There were stars and bells as pretty as could be;
But at his first touch, they turned to jelly balls
And were just as much alive as he.

Tom played at hare and hounds with the pretty silver trout,
And great fun that was, too;
Before a shower came he would leap from the water,
Just as the little trout do.

How he liked to see the trout rising up at the flies,
As they sailed round and round in the shade!
Oh, the big beetles tumbled in the water with a flop,
In the place where the silver trout played.

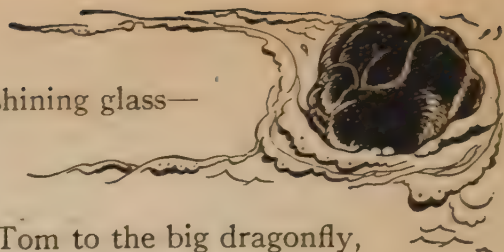
Oh, the green caterpillars on long silken ropes
Dropped down from the boughs and then
Those foolish little rope dancers changed their foolish minds
And hauled themselves up again!



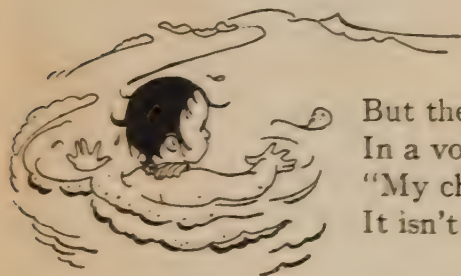
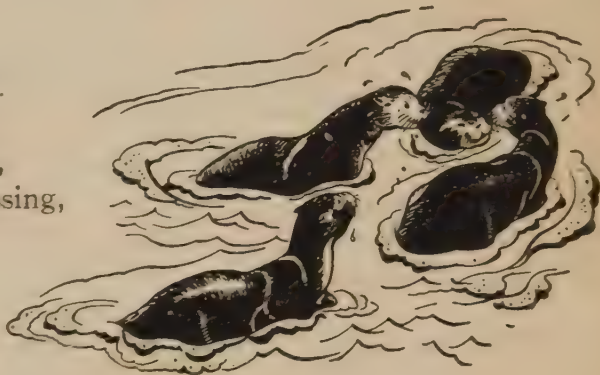
But one day Tom saw a great big ball
Rolling over and over in the stream.
Now it seemed brown fur—now it seemed shining glass—
How very strange that ball did seem!



Then off went Tom to the big dragonfly,
To ask what the ball could be;
But the dragonfly said that he just didn't know;
He was too short-sighted to see.

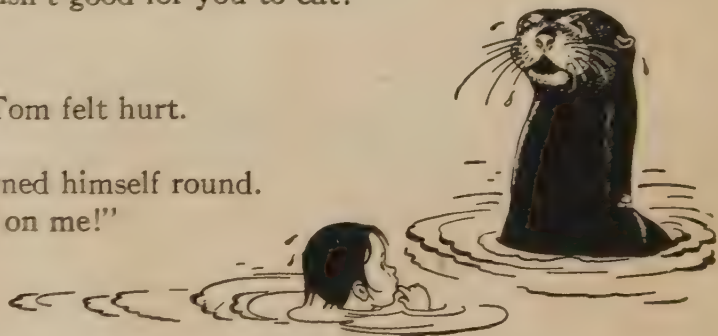


So Tom swam off and up to the ball.
It was four lovely creatures at play;
They were swimming, rolling, diving,
twisting, wrestling, cuddling, kissing,
In the very most charming way.



But the big mother otter spied Tom and she said
In a voice both loud and sweet:
"My children, come away—that's a nasty eft there;
It isn't good for you to eat!"

Now an eft is a lizard and Tom felt hurt.
"I'm not an eft," said he.
"For efts have tails," he turned himself round.
"You can see there's no tail on me!"



"But I see your two hands; you're an eft! You're an eft!
You're no food for gentlefolk to eat.
You may stay where you are till the salmon come along;
Maybe they'll find you a treat!"

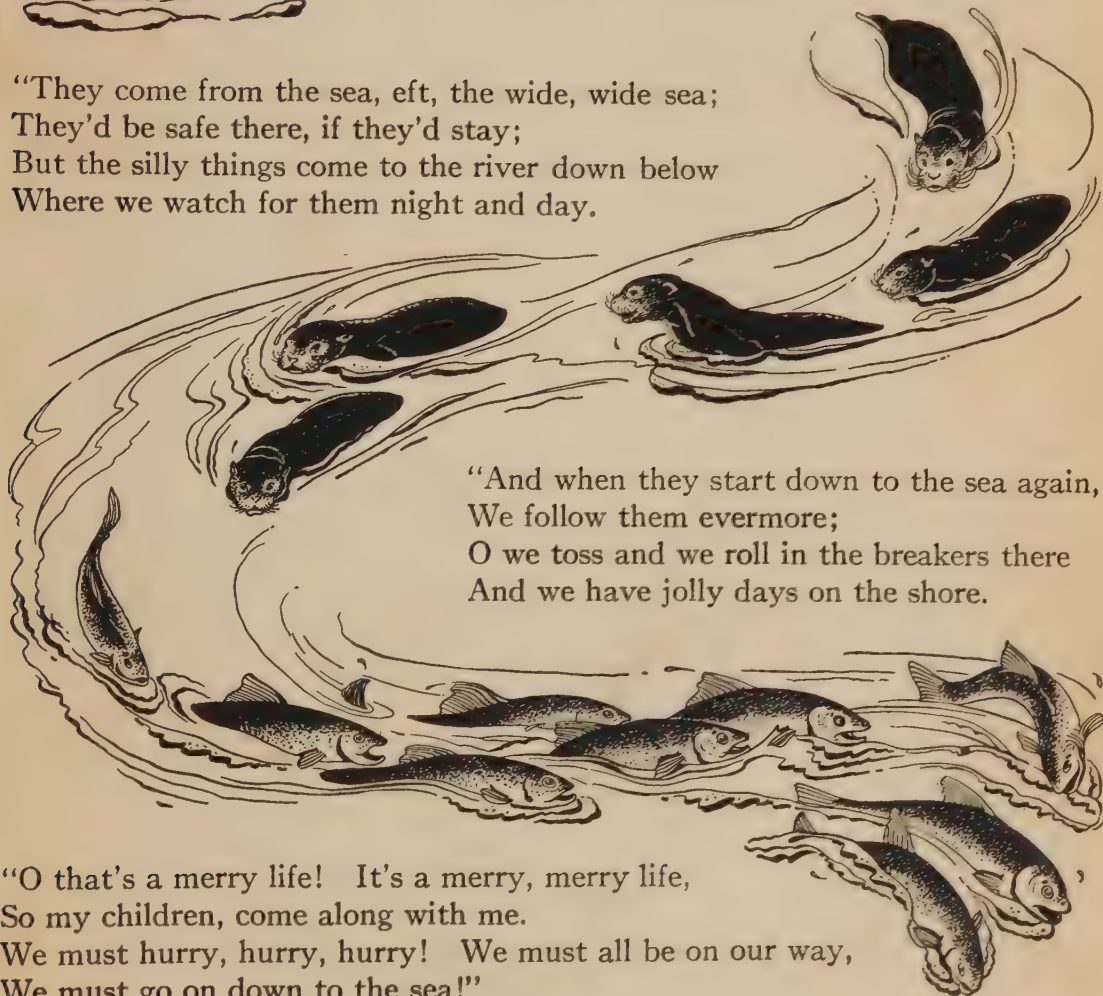
"Salmon, what are salmon?" Tom timidly asked;
 "The fish we eat," cried she.
 "They'll be coming soon. Hurrah! I smell the rain!
 The rain's coming up off the sea."



Then the otter proudly dived with a head over heels,
 And she grinned like a Cheshire cat.

"But where do the salmon live?" asked Tom,
 "I pray you, answer me that!"

"They come from the sea, eft, the wide, wide sea;
 They'd be safe there, if they'd stay;
 But the silly things come to the river down below
 Where we watch for them night and day.



"And when they start down to the sea again,
 We follow them evermore;
 O we toss and we roll in the breakers there
 And we have jolly days on the shore.

"O that's a merry life! It's a merry, merry life,
 So my children, come along with me.
 We must hurry, hurry, hurry! We must all be on our way,
 We must go on down to the sea!"



Then the lightning, it flashed and the rain came down
And Tom saw a new and wondrous sight.
All the bottom of the stream was alive with shining eels,
Twisting, turning, shining, gleaming bright.

"What a jolly 'thunder storm. We must run," said they.
"We must run down, down to the sea!"
And fierce and wild, they twisted, hurrying past;
Tom was frightened, just as frightened as could be.

Next there came a brighter flash. There floating on the stream
Three lovely little white girls lay;
Each had her arms twined around the others' necks,
And "Down to the sea!" sang they.

"O stay! Wait for me!" In a flash they were gone;
He could hear their voices sweet and clear;
Above the roar of thunder and the roar of wind and wave,
Fainter, ever fainter, he could hear.



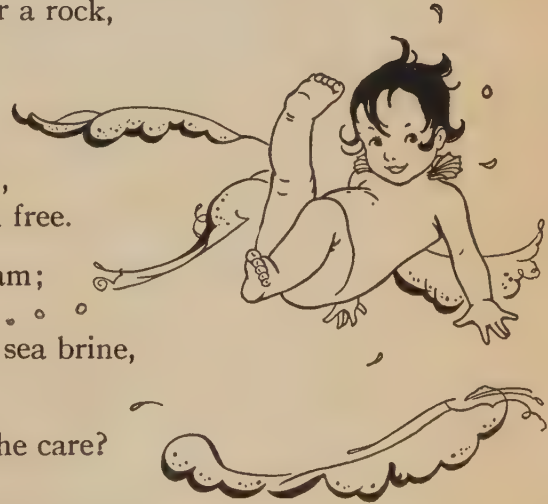


With a swish the salmon passed and he made the stream boil,
Then others came, one by one;
Now they leapt from the water high over a rock,
Shining gloriously a moment in the sun.

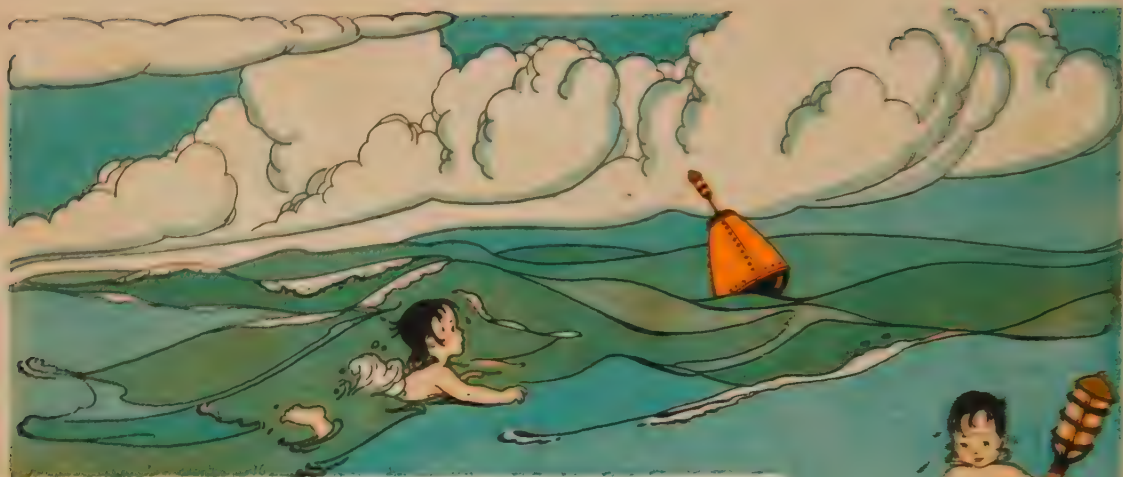
But in a little time the tide came up,
Bringing salt water in from the sea;
And then what a change came over Tom,
He felt so strong and fresh and light and free.

Oh, he leapt in the air and into the stream;
Head over heels, went the boy,
Like salmon when they first feel the salt sea brine,
And leap along crazy with joy.

The tide was against him, but what did he care?
He could see a dancing buoy far at sea.
"I'll go there," he said, "there'll be playmates there,
Who will sport and play all day with me!"



MARIE
WILSON

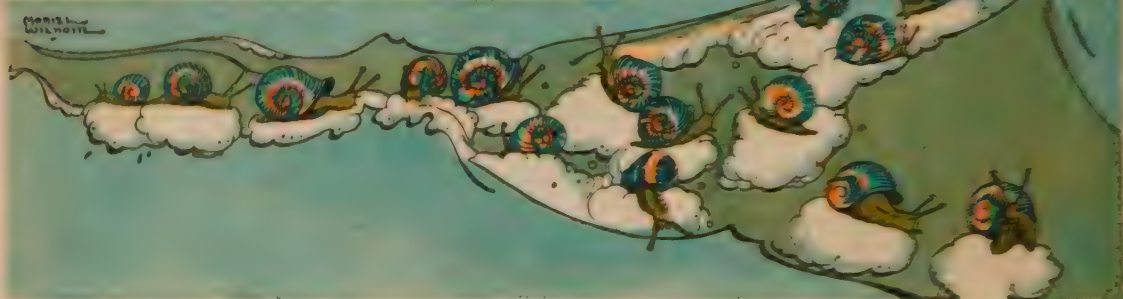


So he swam to the buoy and the little waves danced,
And the sea breeze freshly blew;
And the old buoy danced and the shadows of the clouds
Raced over the bay and flew.

Tom sat on the buoy and he thought and he thought
Of those little white girls so sweet;
And he longed and he longed in his loneliness now
Some other water babies for to meet.

"Do you know where the water babies are?" he would shout!
To whoever went by, he would call!
But some said no and some said yes,
And some said nothing at all.

A fleet of purple snails came a-floating, floating by,
Each on a sponge of foam;
But they said, "We can't tell you, for we float all our lives,
And the middle of the ocean is our home!"

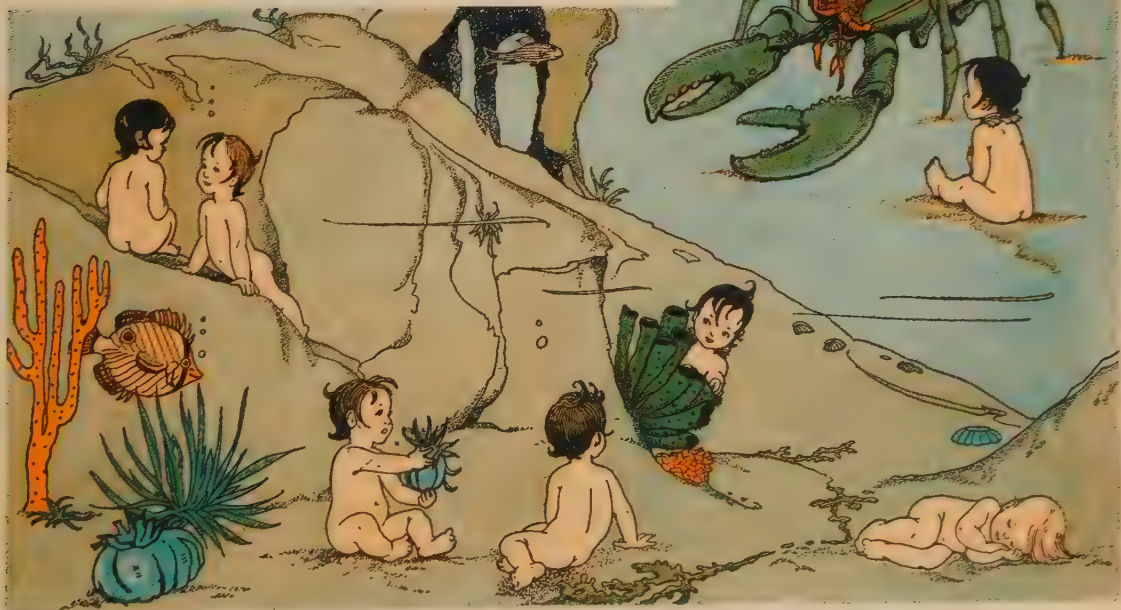
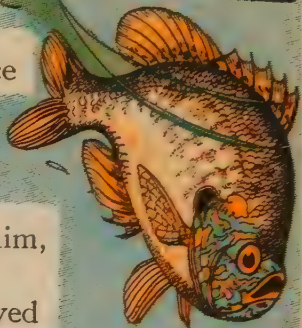




He asked the flat old sunfish with his squeaky little voice
And the porpoises leaping at play;
But the porpoises answered, "Hush, hush, hush!"
For that was all they'd ever learned to say!

At last he found a lobster who stayed and played with him,
And a very fine lobster was he;
And they played until Tom learned that water babies lived
On St. Brandan's fairy island in the sea!

The island stood on pillars and its roots were full of caves
Where the water babies played all day.
When Tom got there he was happy as could be
And his heart was very merry, light, and gay.





But in time he got too uppish and he stole lollypops
And he teased with a naughty, naughty grin;
Till his naughty, naughty naughtiness, it all came out
In prickles all over his skin.

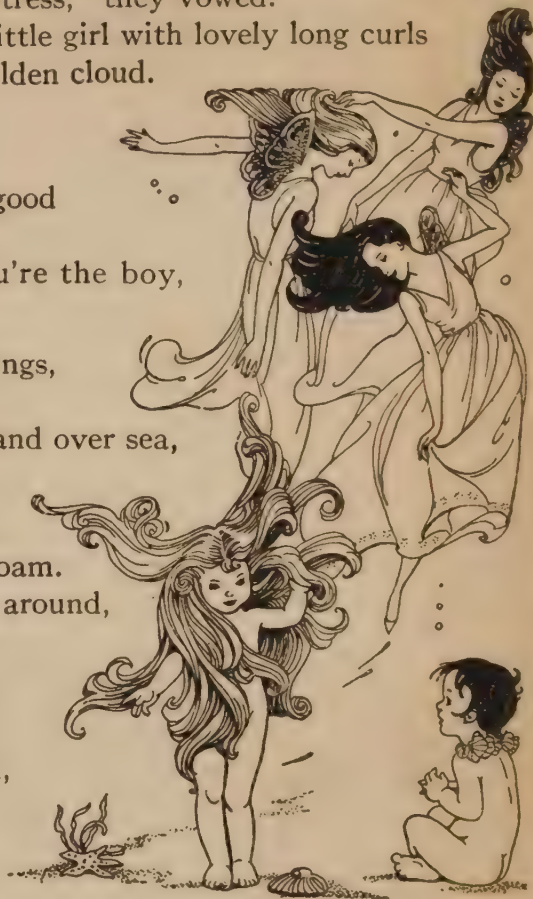
Then the fairies said: "Tom, you will have to be taught!
You need a schoolmistress," they vowed.
And they brought a little girl with lovely long curls
Floating out like a golden cloud.

And the little girl taught Tom how to be good
Till the prickles all vanished away.
Then the little girl said, "Dear me, you're the boy,
Who got into my room one day."

Lo, the fairies had given little Ellie two wings,
It was she standing there with a smile.
She had flown out the window, over land and over sea,
And off to the water babies' isle.

So Ellie taught Tom for seven years more,
Together they would work and play and roam.
But every single week when Sunday came around,
Little Ellie went off home.

Tom didn't know where it was Ellie went
And he grieved when she went away;
For Tom loved Ellie very, very, very much,
And he missed her at work and at play.



Then one day she went and she didn't come back,
And the fairies said, "She'll come no more.
You must go into the world and grow to be a man,
You'll see her then and not before."

So Tom went out and he learned to be a man,
Then he came once more to the isle.
And there, to be with him forever and a day,
Was Ellie waiting for him with a smile.

